

International Journal of Entrepreneurship and Project Management (IJEPM)

INFLUENCE OF STAFFING ON SERVICE DELIVERY OF DONOR FUNDED PROJECTS IN KIENI WEST SUB-COUNTY, NYERI COUNTY

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INFLUENCE OF STAFFING ON SERVICE DELIVERY OF DONOR FUNDED PROJECTS IN KIENI WEST SUB-COUNTY, NYERI COUNTY

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Abstract

Purpose: The study aimed to establish influence of staffing on service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county, Nyeri County.

Methods: The study deployed use of descriptive research design. The target population was nine thousand six hundred and ninety-nine (9,699). Purposive sampling technique was used to select the three organizations that took part in the study. Questionnaire and interview guide were used in data collection. The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches based on the research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize quantitative data into tables and figures and the results presented in frequencies and percentages. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used to code data and conduct statistical analysis on selected managerial factors and service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county in Nyeri County. Qualitative data was derived from open-ended questions. The data was edited, coded and reported using descriptive narratives of the views, experiences and opinions of the respondents.

Results: The results showed that majority of the staff members who were involved in the donor funded projects did not possess the necessary skills in the running of the projects. The researcher was also able to note that capacity building for the leaders has got a greater influence on service delivery, and finally, it was established that absence of commitment leadership is a great hindrance to the strategic implementation of the donor funded projects.

Unique Contribution to Theory, Practice and Policy: Based on the research findings, it is expected that the stakeholders, who include: the donors, funded project managers, and the beneficiaries will gain a better understanding of issues pertaining to donor projects management. Owing to the critical role played by donor funded projects, especially in poverty eradication, aid effectiveness requires a high priority.

Key Words: *Staffing, Funding, Community Support, Communication, Service Delivery of Donor Funded Projects*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Leadership plays a central role in project's strategy implementation and if not properly managed, it poses challenges. According to Kimutai and Kemboi (2017) the project managers must have skills necessary, identities, training and experience to execute the project strategy. The study also found that absence of leadership commitment and particularly key administration by top leaders of an organization as one of the significant hindrances to effective strategy implementation. The duty of project leaders is multifunctional, including overseeing through others, and enabling an organization to adapt to change that appears to be increasing exponentially in today's globalized business environment.

Gitau (2016) conducted a study to investigate how organizational leadership influenced strategy implementation at the ACK Kirinyaga Diocese. The study adopted a case study survey design. A sample of 367 subjects took part in the study. Questionnaire method was used for data collection. The study revealed that majority of the respondents was in agreement that the project leaders motivated workers through encouragement of participation in decision making process. This helped to develop a sense of project ownership that is key for service delivery. The study recommended that project leaders should adopt servant leadership and at the same time encourage bottom-up participation in decision making process.

Similarly, a study carried out by Imunya and Gitonga (2014) in Meru County applied a descriptive research design and a target population of 114 individuals. A sample of 69 subjects was selected to take part in the study. The study found that training is reserved for senior management, had the highest mean of (3.74) out of possible mean of (5.00). Provision of the short-term training assessment was well done with the lowest mean of (2.81). Innovation was encouraged by employees with a mean (3.29). The study recommended that the organizations should initiate training programs for staff members so as to ensure effective implementation of the project activities.

A case study survey was carried out by Kagendo (2013) to establish the influence of training on implementation of projects of Children of Kibera. This study adopted a descriptive research design. The target population of this study included all the employees at the Children of Kibera Foundation. A sample of 38 subjects was selected to take part in the study. Questionnaire method was used for data collection. The study established that majority of the respondents supported that the organization offered its employees effective training on how to run the affairs of the projects. In a study at Children of Kibera Foundation, it was evident the organization offered training to its employees without explaining whether the effective training gained by employees as a result of good organizational leadership had an influence on service delivery of the project. Thus, this study sought to establish the influence of staffing on service delivery in donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county, Nyeri County.

A report by Business Daily Africa (2014) revealed that the project planning and management skills can enhance the absorption capacity, improve monitoring and evaluation system and inculcate the culture of proper planning of the projects financed by the donors in an entity that is very essential in the implementation of any project. The report further revealed that in Kenya the absorption capacity is very low, as it was reported by the controller of budget in 2011/12 the government only absorbed 40% of the money allocated for development. The low absorption

trend is being blamed on poor planning by the ministries, lengthy procurement procedures, and stringent demands from donors (Business Daily Africa, 2014). On the contrary, Taylor (2006) also asserted that personal characteristics of a good project manager includes: control, negotiation, research and monitoring. Taylor further noted that to achieve the service delivery and project implementation, a strong, active and continuous interest in teaching, training and developing subordinates is vital.

Problem Statement

In Nyeri County, the community socio-economic development depends on donor funded projects by either local or international non-governmental organizations. For instance, three quarters of the Nyeri inhabitants have no access to clean water, good housing, food and good infrastructures and other well-built social amenities like schools and hospitals that can meet the numerous needs of the community (Nyeri County Report, 2013). The dependency rate in the County stands at 51 per cent of the total population (Nyeri County Report, 2018). Kieni Sub County has the highest population, followed by Mathira Sub County; the population was 175,812 in 2009 and is projected to be 214,420 in 2018 (Kenya National Bureau of Statistics, 2017). Despite majority of the people in Kieni sub-country being farmers, most part of the area is semi-arid (Nyeri County Report, 2018). This implies that the communities living in Kieni West Sub-county could be in social need more than other sub-counties in Nyeri County due to high population and unfavorable environmental conditions.

The challenges on the ground had initially led to the influx of many non-governmental organizations and donor funded organizations in Kieni West Sub-county so as to help the people meet their needs (Juma, 2010). Some of the organizations that have been present in the region include: Mufoa CBO that deals with Education and Health; St. Joseph CBO that deals with Health, Education and livelihood; Eagle Neema CBO that deals with HIV/AIDS and Education; VIDHA that deals with HIV/AIDS; APHIA plus Kamili that deals with HIV/AIDS, just to mention but a few.

The challenges in the region triggered the initiation of these donor funded projects and Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) ranging from educational projects, health projects, farming projects, and empowerment projects, among others. However, in spite of the information on projects and nature of projects, there is a great threat that most of these organizations are on the verge of exiting or some of them have already left the region (Nyeri County Strategic plan, 2015/2-16). Despite the many researches that have been conducted in the region, that could inform the reason as to the threat of exit of these donor funded projects and NGOs, based on the researchers knowledge there are limited studies that have been carried out on managerial factors influencing service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county. Therefore, the this study sought to examine managerial factors influencing service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county in Nyeri County, Kenya.

2.0 THEORITICAL REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The General System Theory (GST) was used to support the association of the study variables. The GST was discovered by Ludwig (1901–1972) (Davidson, 1983; Hammond, 2003). The GST states that any system is defined as a bounded set of interrelated elements exhibiting coherent behavior as a trait (Constantine, 1986). The theory was developed under the following tenets: Open to environment; interrelated subsystems; input-transformation-output process; feedback; and equifinality.

This theory has been applied in areas of project management, technology, social sciences and in education. If an organization is an open system in constant commerce with its environment, then it follows that the environment will be very important in determining and explaining its behavior and controlling its fortunes. The implication is that a study of management control system must begin by understanding and characterizing an organization's environment. Thus, service delivery control systems must meet the needs of their environment. The concept of interrelated subsystems suggests that management control systems should be viewed as comprising of many interrelated components. Some of these may be structural components such as information, authority delegation, and so on. Others may be behavioral or cultural factors such as motivating behavior or building the right values. These systems are interrelated which means that we must design each one recognizing its impact on the other components.

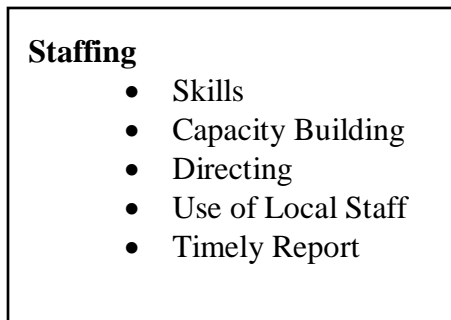
This theory is found relevant to the study on managerial factors influencing the service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county. The organization requires that every person, resource and other inputs are integrated for use in order to deliver expected results within timelines in a development project. This can be made true if the project's management team is able to relate with all employees and program beneficiaries for realization of social-economic growth amongst people of Kieni West Sub-County. Thus, for service delivery to be attained in a donor funded project, there is need for staffing, project funding, and community support of the project. Further, to ensure that all the projects elements are in coordination with each other e.g. managers, workers, beneficiaries among others, communication is very important at every phase of the project. However, if one component of the project is not involved or fails to be incorporated, e.g. the community, the project goals may not be attained as planned.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

The study sought to examine managerial factors influencing service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-County in Nyeri County. Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework of factors influencing the service delivery of donor funded projects.

2.2 Conceptual Framework

Independent Variables



Dependent Variable

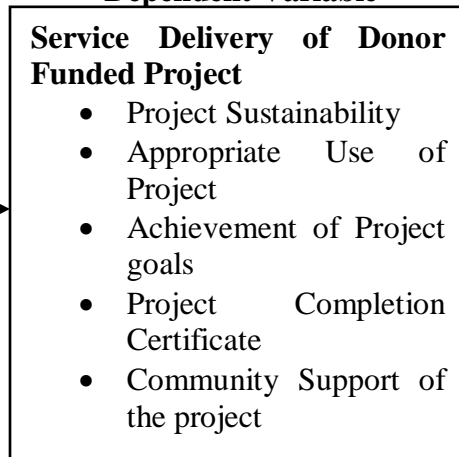


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study used a descriptive survey research design. The target population of this study included both the staff members and the beneficiaries of the selected three donor funded organizations. The study worked with three organizations during the study namely: St. Joseph Community Based Organization (CBO) which has fourteen (14) members of staff and three thousand eight hundred and sixty-five (3,865) beneficiaries; Mugunda fighters of Aids (MUFOA) with five (5) members of staff and three thousands seven hundred and seventy-nine (3,779) beneficiaries; and Mary Immaculate Hospital that consist of fifty (50) members of staff and two thousand and fifty-five (2,055) beneficiaries. These organizations have a total population of nine thousand six hundred and ninety-nine (9,699) (Nyeri NGO Report, 2016) which was the target group of the study in Kieni West Sub-County. There are six donor funded organizations in Kieni West Sub-county. For the purpose of this study, the researcher settled on three organizations that were active and operational in the area. These include: St. Joseph Community Based Organization (CBO), Mugunda fighters of Aids (MUFOA) and Mary Immaculate Hospital. Thus, purposive sampling technique was used to select the three organizations that took part in the study.

Stratified random sampling procedure was used to select the two hundred and twenty (220) beneficiaries from the three (3) selected organizations including, St. Joseph Community Based Organization (CBO), Mugunda fighters of Aids (MUFOA) and Mary Immaculate Hospital. The members were organized into three strata basing on the three organizations where 74 (220/3) individuals were picked using simple random sampling method from each of the organizations. Simple random sampling was effective because all the beneficiaries had similar characteristic that is of interest to the study and a probability of taking part in the study. Stratified random sampling procedure was used to select the fifty-three (53) staff members from the three (3) selected organizations including, St. Joseph Community Based Organization (CBO), Mugunda fighters of Aids (MUFOA) and Mary Immaculate Hospital. The members were organized into strata basing on the organization's departments from which 53 subjects were drawn using simple random sampling technique. The organizations with many staff members were more representatives in the study as compared to those with a few members. Purposive sampling

method was used to select eight (8) administrative representatives from the three selected organizations who took part in the in-depth interviews from the sample of staff members (53). The eight (8) representatives were selected on the basis of experience in management of donor funded projects, two representatives from each organization and one project manager.

Questionnaire and interview guide were used in data collection. The collected data was analyzed using both quantitative and qualitative data analysis approaches based on the research questions. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize quantitative data into tables and figures and the results presented in frequencies and percentages. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used to code data and conduct statistical analysis on selected managerial factors and service delivery of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub-county in Nyeri County. Qualitative data was derived from open-ended questions from the research questionnaires. It was processed by first categorizing and outline responses for each item according to study objectives. The data was edited, coded and reported using descriptive narratives of the views, experiences and opinions of the respondents. Qualitative data was then analyzed and condensed into theme categories by editing, paraphrasing, and summarizing in order to enhance and understand the meaning. Descriptive labels were used to attach meaning to different categories. After coding, summarized data was synthesized then interpreted and presented using different presentation techniques such as verbatim and narratives or direct quotations.

4.0 RESULTS

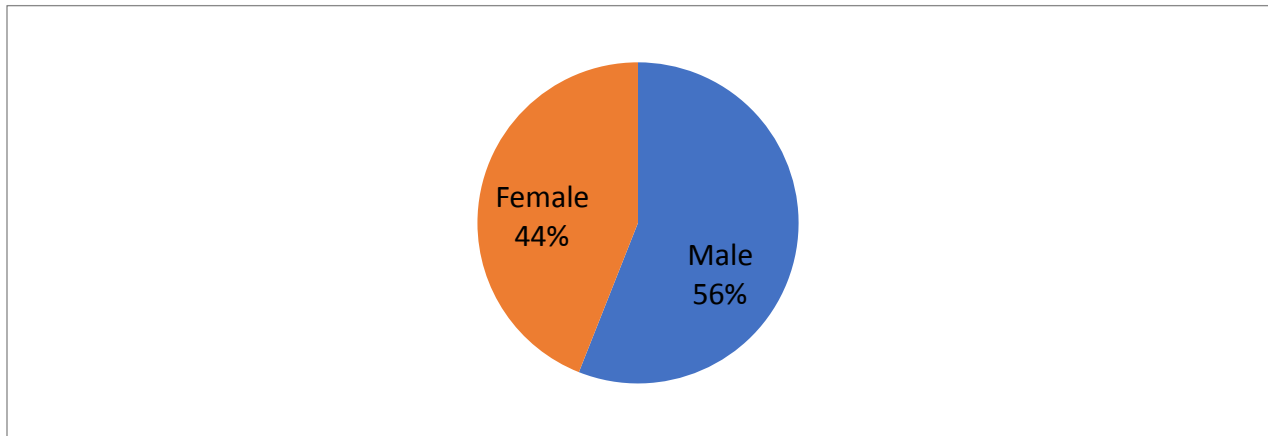
4.1 Demographics of Respondents

This section presents the demographic information of the respondents. It first presents the gender of the respondents; the age of the respondents and occupation of the respondents. Finally, the education level of the respondents is presented. Demographic information provides data regarding research participants and is essential for the determination as to whether the respondents in a particular research are a representative sample of the target population for generalizing purposes. In the case of this particular study, demographic information was collected and below are some of the findings:

4.1.1 Respondent's Gender

The first demographic data to be analysed was the gender of the respondents in this particular study. The findings in the figure 2 show that 56% were male and 44% were female. The gender of the respondents was of great importance as it helped the researcher to take good cognizance of the status of the respondents concerning their views on managerial factors influencing donor funded projects.

Figure 2: Gender of the Respondents (N=230)

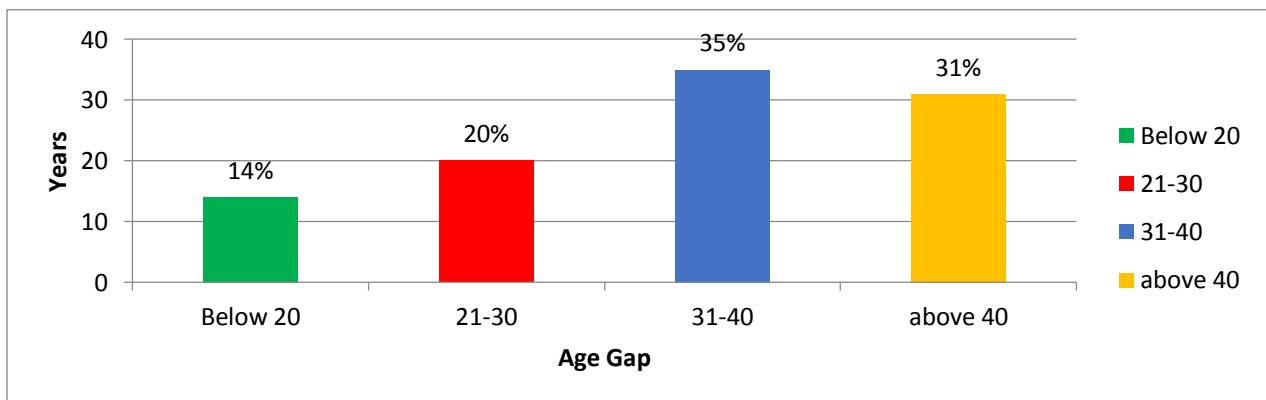


4.1.2 Age of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the age of those who are involved in the donor funded projects in Kieni Sub-County. The age bracket of 31-30 years had 35% followed by the age bracket of above 40 years at 31%. The study also found that 20% were in the age bracket of 21-30 years and 14 % fell within the age bracket of below 20 years.

Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondents are those who have finished school and therefore are working within the donor funded projects. The lower percentage of 14% also reveals that the respondents within this age bracket are also school going individuals who were possibly engaged in their school activities during the period the research took place and were therefore not available.

Figure 3: Age of the Respondents (N=230)



4.1.3 Occupation of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the occupation of the respondents. Table 1 shows that 82.6% were beneficiaries non- staff members of the donor funded projects; followed by beneficiary staff members who recorded 17.4%, while others were not accounted for, it recorded 0%. The findings of the study revealed that majority of those who responded were beneficiaries followed

by staff members. This was because the researcher only sought to know the opinions of those who were within the donor funded projects, because their opinions were most relevant to the study.

Table 1 Occupation of the Respondents (N=230)

Occupation	Frequency	Percentages
Beneficiary Staff members	40	17.4%
Beneficiary non- staff members	190	82.6%
Others	0	0%
Total	230	100%

4.1.4 Education level of the Respondents

The study sought to find out the education level of the respondents as presented in table 2 the study established that 56% of the respondents had the highest level of education as secondary school and this was followed by 26.6% with their highest level as tertiary. A further 17.4% were found to be primary drop- outs.

The findings show that the respondents reported their highest level of education as secondary level as the majority and lowest as the primary school level. This is an indication that all the respondents had attained a level of education that enabled them to read, understand and respond to the issues that had been raised in the questionnaire.

Table 2: Respondents' Educational Level (N=230).

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Primary	40	17.4%
Secondary	129	56%
Tertiary	61	26.6%
Total	230	100

4.2 Descriptive Results

4.2.1 Influence of Staffing on Service Delivery of Donor Funded Projects

This objective sought to examine the influence of staffing on service delivery of donor funded projects Kieni West Sub- County, Nyeri County. For this objective staffing was the independent variable while service delivery of donor funded project was the dependent variable. Specifically, this objective sought to find out the skills of the staff; capacity building of the donor funded projects; use of local staff and finally, prompt reports within the donor funded projects.

4.2.2 Project Sustainability

The respondents were asked to give their opinions concerning the project sustainability within the study region. Table 3 presents the findings as 62.2% of the respondents strongly agreed that the projects within Kieni West Sub County were sustainable, 23% agreed with the sustainability of the projects; 2.6% were undecided whereas 7% of the respondents disagreed and lastly 5.2% strongly disagreed. Its thus evident that majority of the respondents were of the opinion that the projects within Kieni West Sub- County were sustainable.

Table 3: Project Sustainability (N=230).

	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	143	62.2%
Agree	53	23%
Undecided	06	2.6%
Disagree	16	7%
Strongly Disagree	12	5.2%
Total	230	100

4.2.3 Appropriate Use of Project Funds

The researcher sought to establish as to whether project funds were used appropriately in Kieni West Sub- County. Table 4 shows 35.2% of the respondents strongly disagreed; 11.7% disagreed; 22.6% were neutral; 10.4% of the respondents agreed while 20.1% of the respondents strongly agreed. This shows that most of the respondents were of the view that in Kieni West Sub County, most of the project funds were misappropriated.

Table 4: Appropriate Use of Funds Enhances Delivery (N=230)

Poaching	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Disagree	81	35.2
Disagree	27	11.7
Neutral	52	22.6
Agree	24	10.4
Strongly agree	46	20.1
Total	230	100

4.2.4 Achievement of Project Goals

The study sought to find out whether the purpose of the projects in Kieni West Sub- County were attained and if at all the projects within the locality were completed. The findings established that 82.4% that reflected 180 respondents were of the opinion that the projects were achieved while 17.6% that reflects a number of 50 respondents were of the opinion that the projects within Kieni west Sub- County were not achieved. The findings are presented in table 5

Table 5: Achievement of Project Goals With Their Completion (N=230)

Items	Frequency	Percentages
Yes	180	82.4
No	50	17.6
Total	230	100

4.2.5 Community Support of the Project

The study sought to find out if the local members of Kieni west Sub- County supported the projects that are funded by the donors. Of all the respondents, 74% of them strongly agreed that the locals support the projects, 16% agreed that the locals support the projects; 2% of the

respondents were undecided; 4% of the respondents disagreed while 4% of the respondents strongly disagreed that the locals support the respondents. The finding of this is presented in the figure 4.

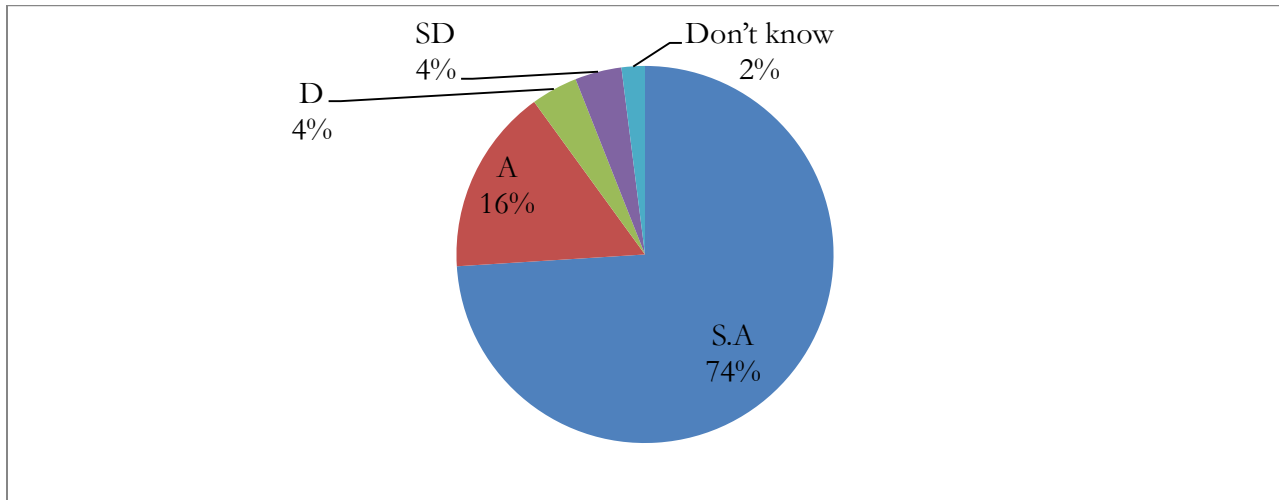


Figure 4: Community Support of the Projects

4.3 Discussion

The findings of this study revealed that majority of the respondents opined that most of the projects were sustainable and 62.2% revealed that most projects achieved their goals. However, the 38.5% strongly disagreed that the funds were used appropriately in the donor funded projects in Kieni- West Sub County. Were consistent with the findings of several related studies. The study revealed that majority of the leaders do not have the necessary skills to run the projects. Absence of leadership commitment in the organizations is a major hindrance to the strategic implementations of the projects. Capacity building of the leadership was also proved to have a higher influence on the service delivery of the donor funded projects.

It was evident that every organization should initiate training programs for their staff members so as to ensure effective implementation of the project activities (Imunya & Gitonga, 2014). The researcher noted that leadership plays the central role in every project's implementation. The project managers should therefore possess necessary skills, trainings, identities and experience that can help them execute the project strategies. An absence of these is likely to result into serious challenges (Kimutai & Kemboi, 2017)

5.0 SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary

The Catholic Church has a head- start in the greater debate of poverty alleviation, and has always approached the problem from a situation of trust and of direct involvement. The gospel requires all Christians to be involved in taking good news to the poor and the church's track record is largely a good one. But this research was premised on the reality that there is room for

improvement on service delivery, and there is plenty of room for more to be done on the donor funded projects.

The Catholic social teaching emphasizes that every person has basic rights and responsibilities that flow from our human dignity and that belong to us as human beings regardless of any social or political structures. Furthermore, there is inheritance in all aspects of creation and it requires careful stewardship of all our resources, ensuring that we use and distribute them justly and equitably. It is therefore proper that a successful aid program requires matching one or more elements of a desirable development strategy with an appropriate leadership, supported by well-designed modalities and effective implementation (Robinson and Tarp 2000). Because of this, the researcher sought to consider staffing as a key component and further the discussion in depth, so as to establish a common ground for service delivery of donor funded projects.

The results showed that majority of the staff members who were involved in the donor funded projects did not possess the necessary skills in the running of the projects. The researcher was also able to note that capacity building for the leaders has got a greater influence on service delivery, and finally, it was established that absence of commitment leadership is a great hindrance to the strategic implementation of the donor funded projects. The findings revealed that inadequate funding of the projects affects the implementation and management of donor funded projects in Kieni West Sub- County.

5.2 Conclusion

The study concluded that service delivery on donor funded projects needs to be enhanced in all the projects. The management of these projects needs to ensure that their staff get proper skills that will help them to be part of the leadership.

5.3 Recommendations

From the findings, the study makes the following recommendations for policy and practice:

Based on the research findings, it is expected that the stakeholders, who include: the donors, funded project managers, and the beneficiaries will gain a better understanding of issues pertaining to donor projects management. Owing to the critical role played by donor funded projects, especially in poverty eradication, aid effectiveness requires a high priority and there is thus need to place emphasis of staffing

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