

## **An Evaluation of the Challenges Facing Public Primary School Head Teachers in the Management of School Projects: A Case of Wajir East Sub-County, Kenya.**

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### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study was to investigate the challenges facing public primary school head teachers in the management of school projects in Wajir East sub-County, Kenya. This study investigated this phenomenon using the following objectives: to find out the financial management challenges faced by school heads in managing school projects in Wajir East Sub County; to determine whether school heads in Wajir East Sub County have appropriate project management skills to enable them effectively manage school projects; and to examine the challenges associated with stakeholder involvement in the management of school projects in Wajir East Sub County. Survey research design was employed in the study. The study targeted all the 56 public Primary schools in Wajir East Sub County out of which purposive sampling was used to get 56 head teachers and 56 Board of Management (BOM) chairpersons to react to questionnaire. Six senior teachers (10% of 56) were interviewed in this study. The study utilized questionnaires and interviews as data collection tools. Reliability of questionnaire items was tested using Chronbachs's alpha and was found to be .83 while that for questionnaire items was done by highly restructuring the questionnaire items. Quantitatively collected data was analyzed using Pearson r with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) while qualitatively collected data was analyzed using Focus by Question Analysis Strategy (FQAS). Data analysis results were presented using Tables. The findings of the study revealed that management of projects by head teachers in Wajir east sub-county had a relationship with financial management, stakeholder involvement, skills of head teachers though with varying degrees. The findings of the study will be utilized by Wajir East Sub County, Wajir County and by all schools managers in Kenya.*

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**Key words-** Sub-county, Challenges, Management, Community, Harambee, Projects

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## **1. Introduction**

Project management and its associated challenges is a common phenomenon in Wajir East sub-county in Kenya. In Kenya, the new Education Bill that aligns education to the new Constitution has had significant demands on head teachers of primary schools (Kenya Constitution, 2010). This is because the Constitution embraces financial management and procurement as important components and further highlights on integrity and accountability in public finance. School heads play a vital role in the management of school projects. Just like the managers in the corporate organizations, school heads face challenges in their capacity as project managers in charge of the school projects. These challenges point to the need for greater strategic planning within schools. Projects and their management and supervision must be aligned to support the school's strategy that is in line with the ever changing demands for learners in Wajir East Sub County (Kutsch, 2008).

## **2. Back ground of the Study**

Project management in its modern form, began to take root only a few decades ago. Starting in the early 1960's, business and other organizations began to see the benefit of organizing work around projects and to understand the critical need to communicate and integrate work across multiple departments and professions (Kutsch, 2008). There are several project management challenges facing most organizations in the world today. In an effort to better capture the history of modern project management, Kwak (2003) identified four periods in the history of modern project: prior to 1958, 1958 – 1979, 1980 – 1994, and 1995 to present. Kwak asserts that the origins of modern project management started between 1900s and 1950s. During that period project management transformed from a Craft system to Human Relations Administration. At that time, better transportation and telecommunication systems allowed for higher mobility and speedy communication. Gantt charts were also developed and in use at that time. It was also during that time that the concept of job specification, which is specifying knowledge, skills, and abilities needed to successfully perform a job. Important projects from that period are Hoover Dam, Interstate Highway and Manhattan project.

In the second period as defined by Kwak (2003), there was significant technology advancement. The main theme in the second identified period, between 1958 and 1979, is the application of Management Science. During that period, significant technological advancements took place. One such advancement was the introduction of the first plain paper copier by Xerox. On the professional side, the institutionalization process of project management began with the creation of the world's first project management association, now known as the International Project Management Association (IPMA). Furthermore, the period was rich with important computer technology developments. In the 1970s, computers progressed from mainframe to mini-computers which made computers more affordable. The affordability of the mini-computers subsequently facilitated the emergence of several project management software companies and tools (Azzopardi, 2014). In the third era, 1980 to 1994, multitasking Personal Computers (PC) made an impact on many aspects of work and business including project management. The efficiency of PCs allowed for developing software capable of handling and organizing complex data required to manage projects. The fourth and final era Kwak presents is 1995 to present (in this instance the present refers to 2003, which is when the book was written). In this era technology continues to be a driving force for change, and greatly impacts what project managers do.

Understanding the past, gives us a chance to better understand the future. Studying the history of project management, one will understand that project management has evolved throughout history. Its continuous evolvement facilitated the advancement of project management, and hence paved the way for the next big project. In spite of the numerous substantial projects in history, there is little documentation of the methodologies or techniques before the 1950s. Advancements in science and technology expedited the progression of project management as a profession. It is now widely accepted that a project manager requires a special set of skills. As organizations evolve so will the challenges facing future project managers. However, while the future may require future project managers to adapt by learning new specialized skills, the fundamental elements that make a project manager a great one will not change; leadership, pragmatism, decisiveness, communication and foresight to name a few.

In Southern Thailand, Head teachers work under intensified and vulnerable situation, insufficient funding and also dealing with the effect of the intensity of cultural unrest and safety of pupils and staff (Sungtong, 2007). In Pakistan head teachers have to deal with issues affecting teachers and pupil, the curriculum, parents, school visitors and central office along side managing projects. Other challenges include role ambiguity, the conflicting expectations of various stakeholders, the tension between inadequate financial resources and the lack of incentives and authority to deal with relevant issues. There are also issues linked to socio-political and sectarian conflicts and disruptions. As a result head teachers pay more attention to maintaining order and discipline than addressing the issues of staff development and support, and pupils' academic achievements and projects (Shafa, 2011). Other challenges that affect head teachers or include issues with sponsors, security and quality of education. It is important however to mention that the challenges Head teachers face are compounded by the fact that they are not trained and/supported in their roles and responsibilities. Head teachers are faced with multiple, complex and wide ranging challenges as they execute various roles and responsibilities in Primary schools. The challenges include dealing with low motivation, managing class sizes, dealing with inadequate resources and managing with fewer funds (Oduro, 2009).

### **3. Statement of the Problem**

Wajir east sub-county primary school head teachers face a mammoth of challenges in regard to school project management. Firstly, the school head teachers experience multiple challenges as they lack the expertise to execute their duties and responsibilities as project managers. The challenges they face are seen right from the start of their appointment. Secondly, the head teachers have little management project skills given that their training gives more emphasis to teaching aspects as opposed to project management. Thirdly, all schools receive financial resources through first formula funding regardless of individual and regional school needs. Though some of the projects are funded by different bodies, partly the school financial bases to supplement such projects are narrow and could not be extended to projects. Fourthly, there is little involvement of the community that has sparse population with harsh environmental conditions and stakeholders in Wajir East sub-county when handling projects in schools. Many primary schools projects in Wajir County have stalled at different levels. Reports from the quality assurance officers in their findings during regular supervision of schools indicate that 80% of the schools in Wajir sub-county had stalled projects (GoK, 2013).

#### **4. Research Hypotheses**

This research was guided by the following speculations:

- i There is no Significant Relationship Between Financial Management Challenges Faced by Head Teachers and Management of School projects in Wajir East Sub-County.
- ii There is no Significant Relationship Between Appropriate Management Skills by Head teachers and Management of School projects in Wajir East Sub-County.
- iii There is no Significant Relationship Between Stake Holders Involvement Challenges faced by School Head Teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.

#### **5. Literature Review**

A project is seen primarily as a planning process which uses one or more scarce resources during a specific time for the purpose of producing some economic returns or output at a later date. To Bieman and Smidh (1970) a project is a capital investment to develop facilities to provide goods and services. Kayode (1979) also stated that the important aspect of a project is not whether it is action or physical goods / works – oriented, but rather the investment in value and the benefits expected. Therefore, we can define a project as a task or series of tasks that has a definable beginning and end, and requires the expenditure of one or more resources that must be completed in order to achieve the objective for which it is instituted.

School management is a complex process that requires committed and visionary leadership (Bush, 2007). A school Head teacher is charged with the responsibility of managing school physical facilities, staff personnel, school finance, the curriculum, pupils and school community relations (Kelechukwu, 2011). As such, the school Head teacher acts as a project manager. Project management processes are normally divided into initiating, planning, executing, controlling and closing processes (Prabhakar, 2008). Within the education setting, to these processes are added some more, so that, as Olembo (1992) and Okumbe (1998) noted, the complex work of Head teachers is categorized into the following areas: planning, staffing, organizing and controlling, co-ordination, influencing and motivating, consulting and communicating and evaluating.

According to Sindhvad (2009) school Head teachers by virtue of their position are responsible for control and coordination of instructional programmes within the school setting. If we look at a Head teacher as a project manager, one expected to plan, implement, manage, maintain and evaluate the entire education system – physical facilities, human resource, pupils, financial inputs and the curriculum – then we see the need for adequate preparation of school heads in project management. Yet as noted by Odhiambo (2005), most teachers are promoted to head schools without initial training in school management.

Project management has long been considered as an academic field for planning-oriented techniques and, in many respects, an application of engineering science and optimization theory. Much research has also been devoted to the search for the generic factors of project success. Project management has, however, in the last decade received wider interest from other academic disciplines, including the field of education. The benefits of project management in

education include: Project management tools are required in education when implementing large scale projects as well as creating a single educational program; and educational staff are continuously involved in educational projects; According to the Global Accreditation Center for Project Management education programs, in 2009 “U.S. News and World Report had ranked project management as the third most valued skill by employers, behind only leadership/negotiation skills and business analysis” (Project Management Institute, 2013). The demand is increasing for project management as a core competency in various fields such as Information Technology, engineering, business, health care, education, construction and manufacturing. Academe responded by offering several programs and degrees in project management designed to prepare prospective project managers with the knowledge and tools that can allow them to succeed in all phases of project management.

The Strengthening of Primary Education (SPRED) project in Kenya was to improve access for all Kenyan children to the full cycle of primary education and to raise the quality of teaching and learning in the key subject areas of Mathematics, Science and English. SPRED was approved in March 1991, commenced in January 1992 and was completed in March 1996, following a 3-months extension. A successor project, SPRED 2, is under implementation. Among the immediate objectives (purposes) in the original project framework was to institutionalize more firmly, nationwide, the primary level in-service training based on Teacher Advisory Centres (TACs) by upgrading training, resources and professional administrative support

School management has run a long race over the past years all over the world. Each public Primary school in Kenya is responsible to a Sub County education office (DEO), School Management board, and a parent-teacher association (PTA). The DEO, the most local ministry office, is a conduit of information from each school on enrollments, staffing needs, material needs, school conditions and academic information to the County Director’s Office (CDO) which then transmits it to the central ministry (World Bank, 2007). According to Musera et.al,(2012), Primary school heads are appointed by the Ministry of Education (MoE) through the Teachers Service Commission (TSC). The head teacher of every Primary school is a member and a secretary of the Management board. The school head is recognized by the government as an accounting officer. He is directly accountable to the DEO and to the School Management board, and he is also supposed to report to the PTA (especially on the use of its resources). Each Primary school also has a PTA. PTAs were created by a Presidential Directive in 1980 and consequently have little real authority because they were not created by a legislation of parliament. They also support the school’s program by raising funds to supplement Primary school budgets and making decisions about the expenditures of these funds.

In Kenya, there are schools which have been fundraising for school buildings or buses in perpetuity. Mechanisms for financial oversight over such funds are minimal and thus the head teacher is able to manipulate the money collected under the pretext of paying for bills resulting from delays in disbursements from the ministry. This method of raising funds for the schools is a common phenomenon in Kenya (Gori, 2014). The rapid expansion of pupil enrolments in recent years, coupled with inadequate resources to cope with the ever-increasing demand for educational provision, has made school project management a much more complex and difficult enterprise now than a few decades ago. To ensure effective and successful management, the school head must not only be innovative, resourceful and dynamic, but also be able to interact

well with people both within and outside the school. These include staff and pupils, parents, members of the PTA and many other members of the community. All of these need to be brought, in some way or other, into the decision-making and project management process if they are to remain supportive of what the school head is doing. In other words, for the purpose of achieving success as a project manager, the head must create an environment of participation in the running of the school.

## **6. Methodology**

This research was carried out in Wajir East Sub County in Wajir County in the former North Eastern Province of Kenya. The county has a population of 661,941(55% male and 45% female) and covering an area of 55,840.6 km<sup>2</sup>. This represents a population density of 12 people per square km. The target population for this study comprised of 56 public Primary schools, 56 head teachers and 56 senior teachers in Wajir East Sub County. According to Kombo and Tromp (2006) defining a population is essential because it is out of this that samples for actual study are taken. Bryman (2004) notes that sampling is necessary in research because it helps research to move faster and reduce research costs. In this study, purposive sampling was used to select all the 56 public primary schools out of which 56 head teachers and 56 BOM chair persons each per school were selected to react to the questionnaire items. Purposive sampling was used because of the small population.

This study was limited to 112 respondents for quantitative research strategy. The researchers also selected 10% of the senior teachers from the 56 primary schools for interviewing. This translated to 6 senior teachers. In this study, a mixed method approach which has advantages of triangulation along side survey research design was used in this study (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003; Cohen, Manion & morris, 2000). This design was deemed appropriate because it involved collection of data in order to answer questions on the current status of the subjects of the study.

## **7. Validity and Reliability of Instruments**

In order to ascertain validity of questionnaires and structured interview items, the researchers presented the tools to the colleagues in the field of educational management to tell whether the items were valid (Gay, et al., 2006; Gall, et al, 2003). Checking of reliability of questionnaire items was done using Chronbach's Alpha index. Questionnaire reliability was found to be .83. According to Gay, et al. (2006) and Gall, et al, (2003), the use of Chronbach's alpha index through the assistance of SPSS is a more accurate method of ascertaining reliability. For structured questions, reliability was ascertained at two different stages. On one hand it was done by highly restructuring interview schedule questions at designing stage (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). On the other hand it was done at interviewing stage. At this level it was ascertained by the interviewing the interviewees by adhering to the same format and being consistent in asking same questions to different respondents (Gori, 2012).

## **8. Presentation of Data Analysis for Each Hypothesis**

Research tools for use in this study were designed by the researchers. According to Bryman (2004), the selection of tools for use for a particular topic and purpose is essential. For quantitatively collected data, processing was done with the assistance of Statistical Package for

Social Sciences (SPSS) software. First, for each of the hypotheses, testing was done by comparing the items of independent variables with those of a dependent variable. To do this, the items' means for each variable were established because they were the ones that were compared. Secondly, all the items testing independent variables were compared with all the items testing a dependent variable to establish relationships. This was done using Pearson  $r$ -test analysis. The comparisons were based on  $r$ -values,  $r$ -critical (0.197) and a  $df$ .  $p$ -values and an alpha level of .05 were used for the rejection or retention of the null hypotheses (Gall, et al, 2003; Kasomo, 2006). The researchers also used a face to face interview though structured questions to enrich the responses' information gathered by questionnaires as a form of filling in the information gaps in this study. This data was obtained from 6 senior teachers since they were key informants (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2006). Qualitatively collected data through interviews was analyzed using FQAS. Results of the analysis for both quantitatively and qualitatively collected data were presented using Tables.

## 9. Research Findings and Interpretation of Results for Each Hypothesis

Before analysis commenced, study variables, means and standard deviations were established for quantitatively collected data (see Table 1). It is the means and the standard deviations of the different variables that were used for comparison. Data collected by interviews was grouped into question themes and analyzed by comparing the answers given for each question.

### 9.1. Financial Management Challenges and Management of Primary School Projects in Wajir East sub-County

To determine whether there is a significant relationship between Financial Management Challenges and Management of Primary School Projects, Hypotheses 1 was tested.

#### Hypothesis 1

*There is no Significant Relationship Between Financial Management Challenges Faced by Head teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

To test this relationship, a Pearson product-moment correlation analysis was done to determine the relationship between financial management ( $M=1.62$ ,  $S.D=.384$ ) and management of school projects ( $M=1.68$ ,  $S.D =.310$ ) as indicated in Table 1. With 110 degrees of freedom ( $df$ ) the critical  $r = .197$  at an alpha level of 0.05. The analysis produced an  $r$  of .501 which was greater than .197 (see Table 2). The results displayed in Table 2 indicate that there is a positive correlation between financial management challenges faced by head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The two variables were moderately correlated ( $r$  (110) = .501,  $p < .05$ ). From the results of the analysis done to test Hypothesis 1 (see Table 2), it was found that there is a significant relationship between financial management challenges faced by head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. With a Pearson's correlation value of .501, it means that the relationship was moderate but significant. This means that the more the financial management challenges faced by head teachers, the more the challenges to the management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The results also indicated that the  $r$ -critical (.197) was less than the Pearson's correlation  $r$  (.501) that was used to determine the rejection or retention of the null hypothesis in this study. This means that the null

hypothesis was rejected, thus “there is a significant relationship between financial management challenges faced by head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county”.

Table 1  
*Study Variables’ Means and Standard Deviations*

Variables	M	SD
Financial management	1.62	.384
Appropriate project management skills	1.84	.337
Stake holders involvement	5.11	1.463
Management of school projects	1.68	.310

\* $p < .05$ ; critical  $r = .197$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Structured interview Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4 sought to determine the financial aspects in relation to funding of projects in Wajir East sub-county. These questions were designed to obtain relevant information from senior teachers in relation to funding of projects. In answering question 1, out of the 6 sampled interviewees, 5 (83%) indicated that primary schools in Wajir East sub-county had difficulties in funding of projects while 1 (17%) indicated that there were no financial problems (see Table 3). On borrowing to finance school projects, (question 3), all the respondents 6 (100%) indicated that primary schools borrowed however, at varying degrees.

Table 2  
*Pearson’s Correlation Analysis between Financial Management Challenges faced by Head Teachers and Management of School projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

Variable		Financial management skills	Management of projects
Financial Management	Pearson correlation	1	.501*
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000
Skills	N	110	110
Management of school Projects	Pearson correlation	.501*	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	
Projects	N	110	110



$p < .05$ ; critical  $r = .197$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Table 3

*Utilization of Funds by Primary Schools in Wajir East Sub-County.*

Funds sampled	% responses from 6 Senior Teachers
Has Difficulties	5 (83%)
No Difficulties	1 (17%)
Total	6 (100%)

Table 4

*Funding of Primary Schools in Wajir East Sub-County.*

School Funding sampled	% responses from 6 Senior Teachers
Not Fully Utilized	4 (67%)
Fully Utilized	2 (33%)
Total	6 (100%)

Asked to tell whether funds given by the government were fully utilized in primary schools in Wajir East sub-county, 4 (67%) said no while 2 (33%) said yes (see Table 4). From interview results as displayed in Tables 3 and 4, it can be interpreted that primary schools have difficulties in funding projects and that funds given to schools are not enough.

### **9.2. Appropriate Management Skills by Head Teachers and Management of Primary School Projects in Wajir East sub-County**

Hypothesis 2

*There is no Significant Relationship between Appropriate Management Skills by Head Teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

Hypothesis 2 was testing whether the head teachers had the right management skills for managing projects. A Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to determine the relationship between appropriate management skills by head teachers ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = .337$ ) and management of primary school projects ( $M = 1.68$ ,  $SD = .310$ ) as shown in Table 1. The analysis

gave an  $r$  of .953 which was greater than .197 (see Table 5). At a degree of freedom of 110, the critical  $r = .197$  at an alpha level of 0.05. The results shown in Table 5 indicate that there is a positive and significant correlation between appropriate management skills by head teachers and management of primary school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The two variables were very strongly correlated ( $r(110) = .953, p < .05$ ).

With a Pearson's correlation of .953 in this analysis, it means that the relationship was very strong meaning that appropriate management skills by head teachers was an essential element in the management of primary school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The null hypothesis was also rejected because the  $r$ -critical (.197) was less than the observed  $r$ -value of .953. In other words "there is a significant relationship between appropriate management skills by head teachers and management of primary school projects in Wajir East sub-county".

Table 5

*Pearson's Correlation Analysis of the Between Appropriate Management Skills by Head Teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

Variable		Appropriate project Management skills	Management of projects
Financial Management Skills	Pearson correlation	1	.953*
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000
	N	110	110
Management of school Projects	Pearson correlation	.953*	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	
	N	110	110

$p < .05$ ; critical  $r = .197$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

Structured question 7 and 8 were used to ask senior teachers whether their head teachers were trained or required specialized skills on how to manage projects. In response to question 7, all the 6 (100%) indicated that head teachers were not trained. On specialized skills, 4 (67%) indicated that did not have any skill on project management while 2 (33%) indicated that they were taken into seminars on how to manage (see Table 6).

Table 6

*Specialized Skills for Primary School Head Teachers in Wajir East Sub-County on Project Management.*

Specialized Skills	% responses from 6 sampled Senior Teachers
Not Trained	4 (67%)
Trained through seminar	2 (33%)
Total	6 (100%)

### 9.3. Stake Holders Involvement and Management of Primary School Projects in Wajir East sub-County

#### Hypothesis 3

*There is no significant relationship between Stake Holders Involvement Challenges faced by School Head teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

To test hypothesis 3, a Pearson product-moment correlation was computed to determine the relationship between stake holders involvement ( $M = 5.11$ ,  $SD = 1.43$ ) and management of primary school projects in Wajir East sub-County ( $M=1.68$ ,  $SD=.310$ ) as shown in Table 1. Given 110 degrees of freedom, the critical  $r = .197$  at an alpha level of 0.05. The analysis produced an  $r$  of .755 which was greater than 0.197 (see Table 7). The results displayed in Table 7 indicate that there is a significant positive correlation between the two variables ( $r (110) = .755$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

Results in Table 7 indicate that there is a significant relationship between stake holders involvement challenges faced by school head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. With a correlation of .755, it means that there was a strong positive relationship between stakeholder's involvement challenges faced by school head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir east sub-county. This means that the involvement of stakeholders in education has an effect on project management. With a Pearson's correlation coefficient of .755 greater than an  $r$ -critical of .197 in this result, it warranted the rejection of the null hypothesis which could now read as "there is a significant relationship between stake holder's involvement challenges faced by school head teachers and management of school projects in Wajir East Sub-County".

Structured questions 5 and 6 were used to collect information on whether stake holders were involved in funding projects and whether as a community they were involved in management. For question 6, different groups were given as funders to the projects that include among others the government, sponsors, donors and NGOs. On the challenges faced by the community as stake holders, several varied answers were given that include: illiteracy and lack of funds as the major challenges.

Table 7

*Pearson's Correlation Analysis of the Between Stake Holders Involvement Challenges faced by School Head Teachers and Management of School Projects in Wajir East Sub-County.*

Variable		Stakeholders involvement	Management of projects
Stakeholders involvement	Pearson correlation	1	.755*
	Sig. (2- tailed)		.000
	N	110	110
Management of school Projects	Pearson correlation	.755*	1
	Sig. (2- tailed)	.000	
	N	110	110

$p < .05$ ; critical  $r = .197$ ;  $\alpha = 0.05$ .

## 10. Discussions

The head teachers' functions are varied within an educational setting. The key functional word that describes well the head teacher is that of a manager and a leader in educational dimensions. Earlier writers on management have struggled with two related but distinct questions: what is management and what do managers actually do? Okumbe (1999) separates managerial functions into three areas of planning, organizing, motivating, and controlling. Instructional leadership functions involve all the beliefs, decisions, strategies, and tactics that head teachers use to generate instructional effectiveness in classrooms. Managers focus on "running a smooth ship", while instructional leaders focus on learning and instruction.

According to Project Management Institute (2004), "Project management is the process of the application of knowledge, skills, tools, and techniques to project activities to meet project requirements." That is, project management is an interrelated group of processes that enables the project team to achieve a successful project. These processes manage inputs to and produce outputs from specific activities; the progression from input to output is the nucleus of project management and requires integration and iteration. In this study, hypothesis 1 and research questions 1 and 3 were used to get information related to financial management in relation to project management challenges by head teachers in Wajir East sub-County. It emerged that financial management is a key responsibility of every education manager if the school has to perform well in project management. Without effective financial management, schools may find it difficult, if not impossible, to achieve their goals. This in line with what (Anderson et al., 2001, Chepkonga, 2012) found that financial management if properly done with funds used for the purposes for which they were meant could yield positive results. The financial management aspect had a relationship to appropriate project management skills that are essential to head

teachers in their management of school projects in Wajir East sub-County, an aspect that was tested using research question 2 research questions 7 and 8. In other words, management skills by head teachers were essential for proper financial management of school projects in Wajir East sub-County.

Hypothesis 3 and structured questions 5 and 6 were used to test whether stake holders mostly community members were involved in the management and financing of school projects in Wajir east sub-County. The results indicated that involvement of stake holders has an effect in management and performance. Earlier research conducted by Gori (2014) in Gucha district in Kenya established that community funding is vital for schools and that apart from first formula funding, “cost sharing that puts the community in the forefront by doing it in form of giving of materials, labour, animals and money among others in the *harambee* system that is difficult to quantify in monetary terms” is essential (p. 209). Gori’s sentiments are shared by Bray (1996) who noted that community financing is most dramatic where demand for schooling is strong but government inputs are inadequate. However, the involvement of communities meet these important obligations should be done with care.

## 11. Summary and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate and understand the challenges that head teachers in primary schools face in their management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The study was guided by the following research hypotheses (see Section 4). The analyzed results from data collected by questionnaires revealed that: There was a relationship between financial management challenges facing school heads in the management of school projects; there was a relationship between appropriate project management skills and management of school projects; and there was a relationship between stakeholders’ involvement challenges facing school heads and management of school projects in Wajir East sub-county. The findings of data from interviews on the other hand revealed that: primary schools have difficulties in funding projects and that funds given to schools are not enough; head teachers lacked specialized skills on project management. On the challenges faced by the community as stake holders, several varied answers were given that include: illiteracy and lack of funds as the major challenges.

The findings of the study revealed that there was a relationship between the management of projects by head teachers in Wajir east sub-county and the three study variables that were investigated. All the three variables’ that were used to test relationships with management of projects by head teachers were found to have positive correlations however, with varying degrees (see Tables 2, 3,4, 5, 6 and 7). It also emerged that implementation of projects was a factor for below bar performance in managing projects. Head teachers were found to lack the necessary skill and training on project management and implementation strategies and this in the overall affected the management of projects in primary schools in Wajir East sub-county.

This study is significant in that the variables studied were found to have a link with the head teachers’ inability to manage projects in their schools. In other words the implication is that for head teachers to be able to manage projects well, all the variables studied should be seen to contribute positively towards this course. That is to say: finances should be readily available to

finance projects, head teachers trained in management skills and stake holders fully and properly involved.

## 12. Recommendations and Further Research

Many earlier researchers including Bush and Middlewood (1997) found out that there is a link between management of resources in schools and performance. Project management challenges were the theme of this study. Out of the findings, the following recommendations were made: First, there should be a reliable method of funding of projects for primary schools. This should be done like the first formula of funding to schools. Secondly, all head teachers should be given compulsory training on project management. This should be among others a criterion for appointment of head teachers. Thirdly, county officials who inspect projects should be deployed to monitor the progress of projects at all schools in the county and give reports on school term basis to the ministry of education headquarters.

Effective project management is dependent on many factors. This study embarked on only three variables on management of projects. There is need for more researches on other factors in relation to project management in Wajir east sub-county. It is therefore suggested that the following areas considered for further research. First, there is need to research whether non teaching professionals but experts in project management can manage educational projects in primary schools. This will enable to get some information whether other than head teachers, other professionals can be deployed in schools to manage the projects for the primary schools. Secondly, there is need to research on whether by involving the community in the management of projects in this decentralization era can improve the efficiency in the management of projects in Wajir East Sub-County, Kenya.

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