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CAPACITY BUILDING AND SUSTAINABILITY OF WOMEN DEVELOPMENT PROJECTS IN KISUMU CENTRAL CONSTITUENCY, KISUMU COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract

Project sustainability is one of the most critical challenges for all grassroots, national and international development agencies. Many women development projects have been engaged in capacity building initiatives with a view to improving their sustainability. The purpose of the study was to determine the effect of capacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kenya. The study targeted 10 Women Development projects that have benefited from donor funds in Kisumu Central Constituency. Survey and correlation design was used. The study targeted 10 chair persons, 10 Secretaries, 10 Treasurers and 150 beneficiaries of the Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency. Random sampling technique was used to select 124 respondents from the target population. The study used questionnaire and interview schedules to collect data. The research tested: content validity, face validity and construct validity of the instruments. The reliability of the instrument was tested using Cronbach's alpha and it obtained a reliability coefficient of .85. Quantitative data was analysed through descriptive and inferential statistics while qualitative data was analysed thematically. The results showed a positive weak correlation between the project sustainability and capacity building(r=.315; p<.05). The model was statistically significant ($F_{(1, 88)}$ =9.714; p< .05). The null hypothesis was rejected. Capacity building therefore had a statistically positive effect on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya. Capacity building through competency skill development, environment education and training and administrative capacity enhancement are therefore significant for project sustainability.

Key words: capacity building, project sustainability, training, administration capacity, competency skills, leadership and management skills

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Introduction

Capacity building as an approach to community development is a means to an end. It is a continuous improvement strategy toward the creation of sustainable and effective organization (Nikkhah & Redzuan, 2010). Capacity building is needed to bring nonprofit organizations in terms of operational, programmatic and financial maturity so that it may effectively and efficiently advance their mission (National Councils of Non-Profits, 2017). Marginalized communities lack specialized labor and skills to do professional work and tap locally available resources that are important for particular community development projects (Nikkhah & Redzuan, 2010)

Capacity building key goal is to enable the community to take over a project to the end. It enables parties ranging from individuals to government officers to work together to solve common problems. Capacity building requires deep analysis of existing capacity, identifying capacity needed and designing of appropriate measures to fill the capacity gap. Capacity building can take dimensions including human resources, social resources and financial capacity (Temali, 2012).

According to UNDP (1997), financial capacity building includes knowledge of resources and opportunities. Human resources dimension include issues such as motivation of individuals and teams, skill development, development of relational abilities as well as trust within the project team and community in general. Social dimension of capacity building include issues such as participation structure and shared trust.

Capacity building increases the ability of organizations, groups and individuals to solve problems, perform key functions and moves effectively towards achieving objectives, understanding and handling development needs and in enhancing sustainability (UNDP, 1997). Positive capacity building leads to community and individual empowerment. Empowering the community solves a lot other issues such community participation in a project (Temali, 2012). This also leads to the concept of local solutions to local problems as the beneficiaries are in a better place to engage in productive and informed discussion with staff.

Community capacity building focuses on enabling all members of the community, including the poorest and the most disadvantaged, to develop skills and competencies so as to take greater control of their own lives and also contributes to inclusive local development. Through capacity building communities can be more cohesive, resilient and better placed to confront economic and social challenges. Meaningful and effective community capacity building can be stimulated and fostered by national and local governments and through capacities which communities have already developed, so that power becomes increasingly embedded within them (OECD/Noya & Clarence, 2009). This paper looked as capacity building to include developing competency skills, management practice and administrative capacity through education and training with a view to enhancing project sustainability.

Sustainability is seen within time and changing social, economic and political context. Hibbard and Tang (2004) observed that sustainable development in any community is process oriented requiring extensive participation from the community members with reliance on strong networks to share knowledge, resources and expertise. According to Williams (2003), sustainability is reflected in the capacity of the community to cope with changes and adapt to new situations. A project that is seen as worth sustaining today may not be so in future. Relatively little is known about how programs are sustained and what factors may lead to their failure. Sustainability refers to something which can be kept going. It also refers to resource use and lifestyles which do not damage society (Merriam Webster, 2010). EU (2004) view sustainability as "the likelihood of a continuation in the stream of benefits produced by the project after the period of external support has ended.

Mulwa (2010) noted that project sustainability concerns itself with the continuity of a project until it attains its set objectives. According to Ingle (2005), for a project to achieve sustainability, it needs to be implemented through a strategic approach. The strategic approach incorporates four main elements: future orientation- assumes things will change. Things must therefore be planned to maximize benefits which can be derived from that change; external emphasis- recognize the diversity of the project environment and the many dimensions which impact on project outcomes such as technology, politics, society, and economics; environmental fit- involves planning for a continual fit between the project and its environment, including mission, objectives, strategies, structures, and resources; and process orientation- involves planning and management of priorities in an iterative cycle of conscious and deliberate learning from experience as the reality changes.

Bagheri and Hjorth (2007) described sustainable projects as those whose short term outputs are highly valued by the stakeholders such that they are willing to sacrifice and commit resources to the maintenance of the project to ensure it produces outputs in the long term. In this paper, sustainability is looked as the ability of a project to continue fulfilling the desired needs in the community in the long term even after external support has been withdrawn.

Project sustainability is one of the most critical challenges for all grassroots, national and international development agencies. Globally, billions of shillings have been spent in communities to enhance living standards of the people (Adhiambo, 2012). Further Adhiambo (2012) argues that donor funding can act as a temporary driver for social change, maintaining the social change is challenging. For instance, unforeseen circumstances may threaten the initial uptake of innovative project design elements. Short funding cycles, conflict with time needed to stimulate social change; and potentially worthwhile healthy interventions may no longer be financially viable once donor funding ends.

According to United Nations (2002), community development project can only be self-sustaining, if it meets all the three dimensions of sustainability, namely; economic development, environmental protection and social development. Sneddon (2000) observed that a project that does not meet economic needs of the community quickly become irrelevant and the community lose interest in it.

Over the years, the concept of project sustainability has varied widely and broadened in scope. According to IFAD strategic Framework 2007 – 2010 (IFAD, 2007), within the development community, the notion of sustainability is applied to financial resources, including project funds, indicating that projects and donor support are not limitless. According to Panda (2007) project sustainability is a major challenge not only in Kenya, but also in many developing countries. Most projects implemented at huge amounts often tend to experience difficulties with sustainability. While the trend with implementation of projects is showing significant improvement, post-implementation sustainability is rather disappointing with very few projects being sustained. Panda (2007) further stated that once donor funding and support structures are withdrawn, community development projects stall either due to lack of funds, community not appreciating fully the benefits of a project thus failing to properly maintain the project, lack of knowhow or basically lack of project viability in the target population. According to Khwaja (2003) much emphasis has been put on post project evaluation and post project impact assessment which does not change much on the sustainability of a poorly designed and planned project.

Research objective

To determine the effect of ccapacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya.

Research hypothesis

H_0: There is no statistically significant effect of ccapacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya.
H_1: There is a statistically significant effect of ccapacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya.

Literature review

Merinoa and Carmenadoa (2012) established that social and human capitals are two key components in organizations that must be developed to improve the living standards of people working in common projects. These can be enforced within development projects through capacity building. UNESCO (2010) reported that capacity building means much more than just training activities and includes not only human resource development but also organizational and institutional development.

The WRI (2008) proposed a set of dimensions for assessing the capacity of local organizations. This was reflected in the organizations' vision and strategy, leadership, inclusiveness and gender balance, physical participation, process participation, internal processes, technical capacity, administrative capacity, financial control, and funding sources.

Naheed and Tawawar (2014) examined capacity building in terms of social networking and employee's performance. Data was collected from different bank's employees in Pakistan. The study showed that social networking was an integral part of everyone's life and had a strong impact in people's operations. Though the study was done in Pakistan on bank employees, the present one will focus on the effect of capacity building on sustainability of women development projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya.

Clausen (2012) on her report to United Calgary and Area showed that there is need for capacity building for financial management in the development projects. Clausen (2012) further argued that solid financial management plays a critical role in the development and maintenance of effective organizations. According to The Urban Institute (2001) good financial management practices are critical elements of any non-profit organization and demand careful attention in capacity building effort. TCC Group (2010) observed that financial management includes the competence to manage organizational resources, as well as the capability to ensure efficient financial operations.

Mutonga (2015) studied factors influencing sustainability of donor funded community water projects in Kitui Central Constituency, Kitui County, Kenya. Key finding was a strong positive correlation between community management and sustainability of donor funded community projects. The study recommended need for the government to train community leaders on management of donor funded community water projects before implementation.

Jagero, Komba and Mlingi (2012) assessed capacity building in the form of training on employee performance in DHL and FedEx courier companies that operate in Dar es Salaam Tanzania. The study showed that job training programs had positively influenced employee performance. Khanfar (2011) also argued that training is an active means enabling individuals to make use of their capability.

Ombui, Kagiri and Omoke (2014) looked at capacity building in the form of training and development in government owned research institutes formed under the Science & Technology Act Cap 250 in Nairobi County, Kenya. The results of the study revealed that there was a correlation between employee performance and training and development ($r = .383$; $p < .05$). According to Gove (2012) competencies and skills acquired and refined were widely recognized in today's rapidly changing socio-economic environment as impetus for development.

Kariuki (2014) researched on factors influencing sustainability of NGO funded community projects in Makima Location, Embu County, Kenya. The study revealed that majority of the stakeholders was involved in project identification, planning, implementation and project monitoring and evaluation. There was also a good attempt to build capacity of the benefiting community through trainings targeting various topics.

Research Design

This study adopted both survey and correlation designs. Survey design was selected because the study entailed opinions, ideas and beliefs of respondents in their natural settings. It allowed collection of large amounts of data from the target population, which was expressed quantitatively (Kothari, 2012; Oso & Onen, 2009). Correlation design was chosen because it enabled the establishment of the relationship between stakeholders' involvement and project sustainability.

Target population

Population is an aggregation of objects that conforms to a given specification (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008). The target population included 10 chairpersons, 10 Secretaries, 10 Treasurers and 150 beneficiaries from 10 selected women development projects in Kisumu Central Constituency. The details are shown in table 1.

Table 1:Distribution of the target population

Category	Respondents	Respondents (%)
Chairperson	10	5.6
Secretaries	10	5.6
Treasurers	10	5.6

Beneficiaries	150	83.2
Total	**180**	**100.0**

Source: Social Development Office, Kisumu Central Sub County (2017)

Sample design

A sample design is a framework, or road map, that serves as the basis for the selection of a survey sample. A sample size represents the population of interest, from which a sample is to be drawn (Lavrakas, 2008; Kombo & Tromp, 2006). Yamane (1967) model $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$: n is the sample size; N is the population size; and e is the level of precision was used to determine a sample size of 124 at 95% confidence level. Stratified random sampling technique was used to select 124 respondents from the target population. Stratified random sampling was deemed suitable because of homogeneity of respondents within each stratum. Also, the researcher could exercise control within each stratum to ensure that only important factors are considered. The distribution of the sample size is shown in table 2.

Table 2: Distribution of sample size

Category	Respondents	Respondents (%)
Chairperson	7	5.6
Secretaries	7	5.6
Treasurers	7	5.6
Beneficiaries	103	83.2
Total	**124**	**100.0**

Source: Survey data (2017)

Data collection instruments

Research instruments are measurements tools, which are designed to collect data on a research topic (Kothari, 2012). Structured questionnaire and interview schedule was used to collect data. Questionnaire had three sections: general information; capacity building constructs and project sustainability constructs. Interview schedule interrogated issues of capacity building and project sustainability from the projects officials.

Reliability and validity of research instrument

Reliability is the extent to which research results are consistent and replicable (Amin, 2005; Kothari, 2012). It is the consistency of scores when the research instrument is administered from one set of items to another, and also from one point in time to another (Frankel & Wallen, 2006). The instrument was pre-tested for reliability using Cronbach's alpha (α) approach with a sample of 18 respondents randomly selected from the target population. A reliability coefficient of .85 was obtained which was higher than 0.7 (Frankel & Wallen, 2006) accepted as ideal.

Validity is the extent to which the results of the study can be accurately interpreted and generalized to other populations (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2008).The questionnaire was tested for content, construct and face validity. Content validity ensured that contents of the instrument were adequate. Face validity ensured clarity in font size and type, adequacy of workspace, and appropriateness of language. Construct validity ensured psychological construct or characteristics measured by the instrument were in line with the study objectives. The questionnaire was given to the supervisors to evaluate and rate each item in relation to the objectives as very irrelevant or very relevant on 1-4 scale. Validity index was determined from the assessors agreement scale as $n_{3/4}/N$, where $n_{3/4}$ is the number of items marked 3 or 4 by both supervisors, and N total number of items assessed. A validity index of .75 was determined which was above .70, the minimum accepted value of validity (Oso & Onen, 2009).

Administration of research instruments

Permission was sought from Social Development Office, Kisumu Central Sub County through the Research Department of The Kenya Institute of Management, Kenya. Research assistants were trained on research ethics and how to handle questionnaire constructs. Appointments were made with various organizations. Questionnaires were administered through drop and pick method. This was necessary to give respondents ample time of response.

Interview was conducted with the chairpersons, secretaries and treasurers sampled from selected Women Development Projects.

Data analysis methods

Collected data was checked, edited and cleaned for completeness. Coded data was entered into Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software ready for analysis. Quantitative data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics included frequencies and percentages. Inferential statistics was correlation and simple linear regression analyses. The findings were presented through tables. Qualitative data was analyzed thematically.

Ethical considerations

Permission to collect data was obtained from Social Development Office, Kisumu Central Sub County through The Kenya Institute of Management. Respondents' informed consent was obtained. For confidentiality issues, respondents' personal identifiers were not being taken during the exercise. Personal and sensitive questions were avoided from the outset. Results of the study would be copyrighted.

Results and discussions

The study sought to establish the effect of capacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya. The accompanying null hypothesis was, "there is no statistically significant effect of capacity building on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya". Preliminary analysis involved descriptive analysis of capacity building constructs. The details are shown in table 3.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for capacity building and project sustainability

Statement	N	M	SD
Developed competency skills enhance project sustainability	90	3.97	.867
Positive capacity building leads to community and individual empowerment.	90	3.37	.771
Environment education and training enhances project sustainability	90	3.83	.707
Management practice improved project Eco-efficiency	90	3.60	.845
Project managers are trained on leadership and management of projects	90	3.83	.753
Administrative capacity enhances project sustainability	90	3.81	.959
Overall results	**90**	**3.74**	**.817**

Key: 1.0-1.4 = strongly disagree, 1.5-2.4= disagree, 2.5-3.4= not sure, 3.5-4.4 = agree, 4.5-5.0 = strongly agree; M=mean; SD = standard deviation

Source: Survey data (2017)

Table 3 reveals that developed competency skills enhances project sustainability (M=3.97, SD=.867), environment education and training enhances project sustainability (M =3.83; std. deviation=.701), management practice improved project eco-efficiency (M=3.60; SD=.845), project managers are trained on leadership and management of the project for sustainability (M=3.83; SD=.753) and administrative capacity enhances project sustainability (M=3.81; SD=.959). On the other hand, the respondents were not sure whether positive capacity building leads to community and individual empowerment (M=3.37; SD=.771). The overall results showed an agreement that capacity building affect project sustainability (M=3.74; SD=.817).

The qualitative data from the interview schedules concurred with the descriptive statistical findings. Sampled statements obtained from the respondents were:

> *The projects organized training on leadership for improvement of management skills. The environment education and training enhanced project sustainability within our project.*
>
> [Interviewee 6, 10, 11&15]

Administrative capacity is very significant for our project sustainability. In addition, competency skills have encouraged project sustainability.

[Interviewee 1, 2, 4&7]

Though there was general agreement that capacity building affect project sustainability, there was lack of surety about the degree of effect. In order to show the degree of effect, simple linear regression analysis was sought. The general simple linear regression model was

$$y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x + \varepsilon \quad (1)$$

The response variable y is project sustainability while explanatory variable is capacity building. The term ε is the *residual* and represents deviation of observed values of project sustainability from that approximated by the model. Linear regression analysis was therefore sought and the results interpreted in stages. The details are provided in table 4.

Table 4: Regression analysis of capacity building and project sustainability

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.143	.505		4.246	.000
	Capacity building	.419	.134	.315	3.117	.002
	Goodness of fit:					
	$R = .315$					
	$R^2 = .099$					
	Adjusted $R^2 = .089$					
	$F(1,88) = 9.714$					
	$p < .05$					

a. Dependent Variable: project sustainability
b. Predictors: (Constant), capacity building
Source: Survey data (2017)

In table 4, R is the correlation coefficient. It provides a weak degree of statistically positive correlation (R=.315) between capacity building and project sustainability. R-square of .099 measures part of project sustainability which was explained by capacity building. It showed that approximately 9.9% of the variation in project sustainability was attributed to variation in capacity building**.** The adjusted R square provides an idea of how the model may be generalized. It should be as close to R square as much as possible if not the same. In this case, the difference for the final model is small; i.e. .01 or 1%. This means if the model was derived from the population rather than a sample, then it would have accounted for approximately1% less variance in project sustainability. The overall model was statistically significant ($F_{(1, 88)}$ =9.714; p< .05). The null hypothesis was rejected. Capacity building therefore had a statistically positive effect on sustainability of Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya.

Un-standardized coefficient values were used to construct the regression equation. The Beta coefficient for capacity building was .315 (p<.05) and was statistically significant. It made a unique contribution in explaining project sustainability. Table 4.11 and model 1 shows that optimum regression equation showing the relationship between capacity building and project sustainability was

$$y = 2.143 + .419x \quad (2)$$

Regression model 2 had a weak degree of positive correlation (R=.315) between stakeholders' capacity building and project sustainability. The model was 9.9% explained by the variation in capacity building and was statistically significant.

Conclusion

There was a weak positive relationship between capacity building and sustainability of the Women Development Projects in Kisumu Central Constituency, Kisumu County, Kenya. The contribution of capacity building though small was statistically significant. Capacity building in project through: competency skill development, environment education and training and administrative capacity enhancement are therefore significant for project sustainability

Recommendations

i. More capacity building strategies should identified and be strengthened to enhanced project sustainability; and

ii. Other project life cycle with particular demands of knowledge, skills and attitude change should identified if effective project sustainability is to be achieved

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