

**EXTENT TO WHICH COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION  
IN PROJECT IDENTIFICATION AND PLANNING  
INFLUENCES SUSTAINABILITY OF NMK FOOD  
SECURITY PROJECTS IN KISUMU WEST, KENYA**

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**ABSTRACT**

Community participation has been ignored in the development of these interventions leading to failures and non-sustainable Projects. To address this shortcoming governments have employed a new strategy of partnership building and participation of the community members. This Research aims at exploring the influence of Community participation on sustainability of NMK funded Food Security Projects in Kisumu West, Kisumu County, Kenya. The independent variables namely need analysis; project identification and project planning were found to have a significant positive relationship with NMK project sustainability. Community Participation in Monitoring and Evaluation explained 6.3% of sustainability of projects, Variables of monitoring and evaluation were found to have a weak positive correlation with NMK project sustainability. The study thus recommended strengthening community participation in monitoring and evaluation of NMK projects to improve project's sustainability.

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## INTRODUCTION

Kenyan government and other development partners have funded many food security projects in an effort to reduce food insecurity. Unfortunately such projects leave little impact after the end of funding (Wabwoba, 2012). Overwhelming amount of research has been carried out on the NMK programme and its impact on food security. A study by Nduta (2012) focused on examining the socio-economic factors influencing implementation of NMK programme for sustainable food security in Makuyu Division, Murang'a County. However there is a Research gap on the influence of Community Participation on sustainability of NMK funded food security projects in Kisumu West sub County. This Research has concentrated on finding out if community participation influences sustainability of the NMK funded food security projects in terms of food production, access (availability) and utilization at community level. The study tried to find out if Community participation in Project identification and Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation and Marketing of Products really influences sustainability of the NMK food security projects in Kisumu West, Kisumu County, Kenya.

## RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is: To investigate the extent to which Community participation in Project Identification and Planning influences sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West, Kenya

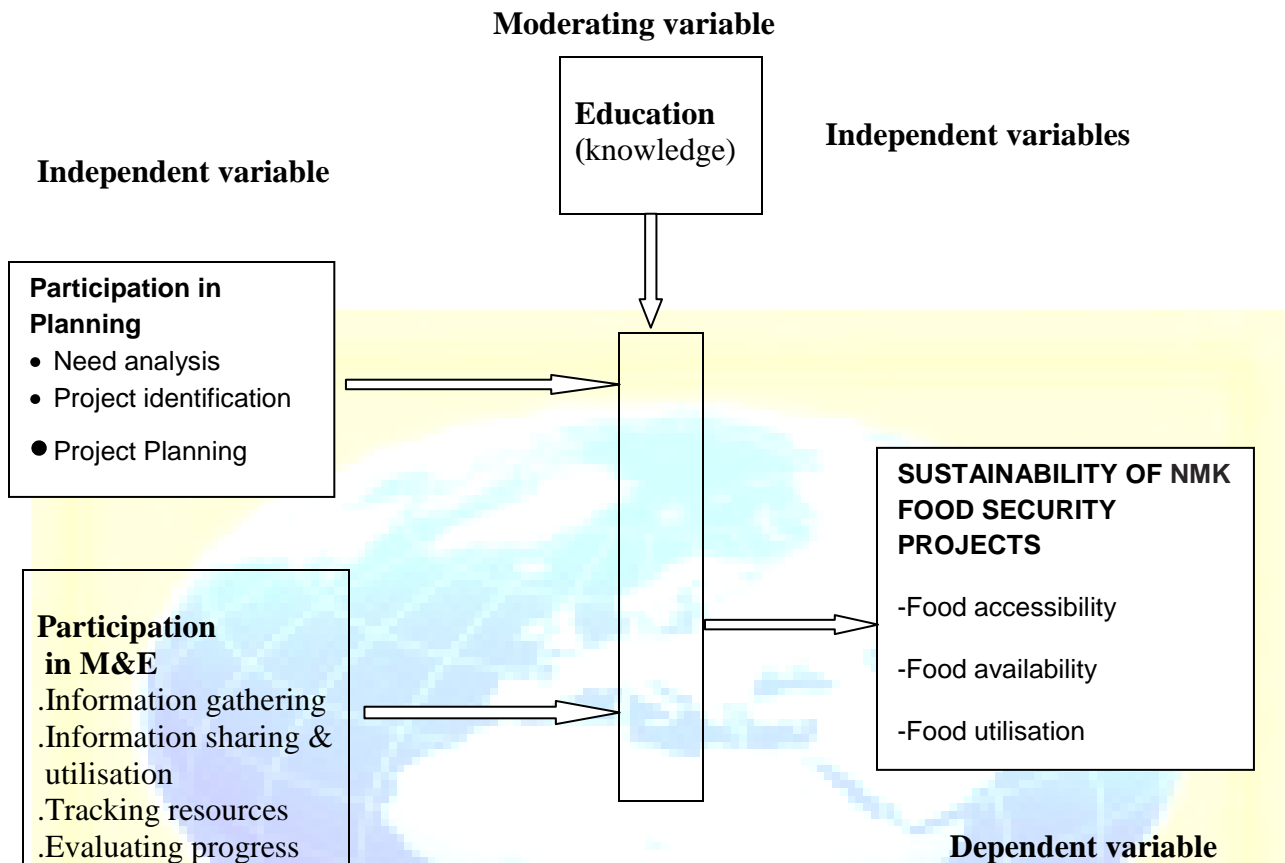
The study tested the following Hypothesis.

There is a significant relationship between Community Participation in Project Planning and sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The study was guided by the following conceptual framework.

### Figure: 1 conceptual framework



The conceptual framework shows community participation in project need analysis, project identification, project planning, project monitoring and evaluation, as the key independent variables. It is envisaged that a combination of the independent variables influences NMK project sustainability. The Moderating variable in this study is Education (knowledge) because it has a strong contingent effect on the nature of the relationship between the dependent and the independent variable. It modifies the nature of the relationship between independent and dependent variables either positively or negatively.

## FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

### Demographic characteristics of Respondents

The study started by exploring the Distribution of Respondents by Gender and establishing its influence on sustainability of NMK food security Projects. The researcher asked the respondents to indicate their Gender and presented the findings in table 4.1

**Table 4.1:**

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	79	56.43
Female	61	43.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>

As presented in table 4.1, from the sample of 140 a total of 79(56.43%) were male and 61(43.57%) were female. Despite the study implicating that more male participated in the NMK Project activities than female, the number of female indicates their readiness to participate and that there is more awareness than before on the part of female gender to be involved in community development (Osaghae, 2012). These findings also show that the study involved the views of both male and female group members meaning that the findings of the study were representatives and unbiased based on gender.

The study examined the age distribution of the group members and how it influences sustainability of food security projects and presented the findings in table 4.2

**Table 4.2:**

Age distribution of the group members

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18-30	26	18.57
31-40	54	38.57
41-50	41	29.29
51-60	19	13.57
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 4.2, a total of 26, (18.57%) respondents were aged between 18 and 30 years. A total of 54 (38.57%) were between 31 and 40 years old. Another 41(29.29%) were aged between 41 and 50 years of age and lastly 19(13.57%) were between 51 years and 60 years old. These findings clearly show that majority of the group members, in fact over 50% of the group members, were below 40 years of age and were thus able to engage actively in the physically involving agricultural activities. This is a pointer that they were the most involved group members in the group activities. According to a study by Jimmiel (2005) in Zimbabwe; age distribution has a key role in determining labour distribution. The study findings also concur with the conclusion made by Kabue (2011) that young people may be receptive to new ideas and innovations in agriculture and they are more likely to try out new initiatives.

Checkoway and Richards-Schuster (2003) and Walker (2010) also argued that the youth participate in food security projects, but their participation is uneven. The authors further elaborated that some young participate with fervour, and others express interest but are unsure how to proceed, and still others try to proceed but lack support from adults or face obstacles in the community. This makes youth participation undefined, underdeveloped and hence requires further exploration in order to educate and encourage youth to participate in community development projects.

The study also explored the level of education of the group members and how it influences sustainability of NMK food security project. The study asked the respondents to indicate their age brackets, results were analysed and the findings presented in table 4.3.

**Table 4.3:**

Distribution of the Respondents by Level of education

Level of education	Frequency	Percentage
Never attended school	6	4.29
Primary School	53	37.86
Form four level	81	57.86
<b>Total</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 4.3, 6(4.29%) group members had never attended school, 53(37.86%) attained primary education and 81(57.86%) group members had form four level of education. From these findings, 134(95.72%) group members had some formal education and were therefore able to read and understand the tools of data collection and give reliable findings. The other respondents who had challenges were assisted by the researcher. A study by Michelle (2006) carried out in Senegal also reported that non-formal education had a key role in promoting community participation in implementation and sustainability of community projects. Educational attainment by the household leads to awareness of the possible advantages of modernizing agriculture by means of technological input, read and understand documentation, read instructions on the fertilizer packs, and diversification of household income which in turn would enhance projects sustainability (Ndata, 2012)

### Community participation in Project Planning and project sustainability

The study began by exploring opinion of the group members on the extent of participation in project identification and planning and presented the findings in table 4.4. The respondents were to respond in a four point Likert scale. Strongly disagree was scored as 1, disagree was scored as 2, agree was scored as 3 and strongly agree was scored as 4. For each statement the scores of the responses were summed up and divided by the total number of respondents to give the mean. A mean less than 1.5 means that the respondents were strongly disagreeing, a mean response ranging between 1.5 and 2.5 meant that the respondents were disagreeing with the statement; a mean response ranging between 2.5 and 3.5 meant that the respondents were agreeing with the statement and lastly a mean greater than 3.5 meant that the respondents were strongly agreeing.

**Table 4.4:**

Perception of Respondents on community participation in project identification and planning

Statement		Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Mean	Interpretation
A Research Organization	<b>Freq.</b>	11	84	45	3.243	Agree

should carry out a research in this area to find out community needs before implementation of NMK program	%	7.86	60	32.14		
Ministry of Agriculture should consult me before the initiating the NMK program	<b>Freq.</b>	5	81	54	3.35	Agree
	%	3.57	57.86	38.57		
It is necessary for me to be involved in identifying Community needs	<b>Freq.</b>	2	71	67	3.464	Agree
	%	1.43	50.71	47.86		
I should participate in deciding the project activity to carrying out	<b>Freq.</b>	3	68	69	3.471	Agree
	%	2.14	48.57	49.29		
I should participate in Planning of the project	<b>Freq.</b>	2	73	65	3.45	Agree
	%	1.43	52.14	46.43		
Participation should be continuous and not adhoc	<b>Freq.</b>	3	70	67	3.457	Agree
	%	2.14	50	47.86		
Participation should include all the community members	<b>Freq.</b>	2	67	71	3.492	Agree
	%	1.43	47.86	50.71		
Participation in project identification and planning influences the sustainability of the projects	<b>Freq.</b>	2	65	73	3.5	Strongly agree
	%	1.43	46.43	52.14		

The respondents were also asked the group members whether the Ministry of Agriculture should consult them before initiating the NMK program. A total of 5 (3.57%) respondents disagreed, 81(57.86%) respondents agreed and 54(38.57%) respondents strongly agreed. The mean

response was 3.35; this means that on average the respondents agreed that the ministry of Agriculture should consult them before initiating the NMK program.

The study capped the analysis of the objective by exploring the influence of community participation in project Identification and planning on sustainability of NMK food security projects using a cross tabulation analysis as presented in table 4.5.

**Table 4.5:**

Participation in project identification and planning on sustainability of food security Projects

Extent of participation	Rate of Sustainability						Total	
	Average		Good		Very good			
	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%	Freq.	%
Very high	3	2.14	4	2.86	46	32.86	53	37.86
High	11	7.86	20	14.29	19	13.57	50	35.72
Average	15	10.71	13	9.29	9	6.42	37	26.42
<b>Total</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>20.71</b>	<b>37</b>	<b>26.44</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>52.85</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>100</b>

The respondents were asked to rate the extent they were involved in needs analysis, project identification and project planning. A total of 53(37.86%) respondents rated their participation in three areas as very high, 50(35.72%) rated it as high and 37(26.42%) rated it as average. The respondents were asked to state how they would rate food accessibility, food availability and utilisation from NMK food security projects. Out of the 74 respondents who rated it as very good, 46(32.86%) rated the community participation in needs analysis, project identification and planning as very high, 19(13.57%) rated it as high and 9(6.42%) rated it as average.

The study sought the opinion of the NMK facilitators on the success of the community groups and presented the findings in table 4.6



**Table 4.6:**

Success of the community groups

Success of the community groups	Frequency	Percentage
Successful	2	75
Not successful	1	25
<b>Total</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>100</b>

From table 4.6, a total of 2(75%) NMK facilitators said that the groups were successful while 1(25%) NMK facilitator said that the groups were not successful.

**Hypothesis 1**

Ho: There is no significant relationship between Community Participation in Project Identification and Planning and sustainability of NMK food security projects in Kisumu West

In testing the Null hypothesis, the study used correlation analysis relating Community Participation in Project Identification and Planning as the independent variable and sustainability of NMK food security projects as the dependent variable. The correlation analysis was computed at 5% level of significance. Table 4.7 shows the results of the correlation analysis.

**Table 4.7:**

Correlation analysis between project identification and sustainability of food security projects

Correlation (r)	0.4822
P value	0.000
r <sup>2</sup>	0.2325

From the correlation analysis presented in table 4.7, the correlation between Community Participation in Project Identification and Planning and food security projects as the dependent variable was found to be 0.4822. This was a positive value implying that the more the community participation in project need analysis, project identification and project planning the more sustainable are the NMK projects. The p value was truncated at 0.000, this is a value less than 0.05, this implying that the relationship between Community Participation in Project need analysis, project Identification and Planning and sustainability of NMK food security projects

was positive and significant. This confirms findings on table 4.5 that found a significant number 46 (32.86%) of participants who rated their participation in need analysis, project identification and project planning as very high also rated the NMK project sustainability as very good. The coefficient of determination  $r^2$  was found to be 0.2325. This means that community participation in project needs analysis, project identification and project planning contributed to 23.25% of the NMK project sustainability.

## CONCLUSIONS

From the study findings, the study concludes that, Community participation in project identification and planning influences sustainability of NMK food security projects. The researcher found out that community participation in conception, design and implementation of the projects is above average meaning that contributions by the community members influence decisions made during design and implementation stages. Participatory needs identification by community members is important because once they collectively conceive a problem and prioritize it; they then move it to the stage of appreciating and discussing how to solve it. The study therefore concludes that ownership of community projects by the beneficiaries is very important for sustainability. The study findings are similar to those found by Mulwa (2008) who noted that the level of community ownership depends largely on the extent of community participation during conception, design and implementation of projects. He further reports that planning also helps to clarify the scope of the problem at hand and the resources available. The community is also able to set the objectives, goals and how the intended development will proceed. The study findings can also help us in concluding that community member's participation in the tracking of the project resources will help to develop sense of ownership and enhance sustainability of project outputs and outcomes. The study recommends that for communities to benefit maximally through community projects, the following measures should be adopted: involve group members in project design, implementation, resource contribution, monitoring and evaluation, to ensure ownership and hence sustainability.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommends that community participation in need analysis, Project Identification and project Planning should be strengthened. Evidence from this study indicates that the three variables explain only 23.25% of NMK project sustainability. The government thus should invest more resources in building the capacity of communities towards project planning and management.

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