

**DETERMINANTS OF PERFORMANCE OF TRANSLATION PROJECTS IN NAIROBI, KENYA**

**Juster Nyaga<sup>1</sup> Olando John Ochieng<sup>2</sup>**

**<sup>1</sup>Lecturer Management University of Africa, Kenya, <sup>2</sup>Master of Management and Leadership Student at Management University of Africa, Kenya**

**Abstract**

*The project dynamic has significantly permeated translation companies in Kenya but there exists certain lapses within the organization that have had various effects on the performance of projects of the entities. The purpose of the study was to thus establish whether there was influence of certain determinants on performance of projects at the translation companies. Thus, the specific objectives were to establish the influence of project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building on performance of translation projects in Nairobi; and also assess the effect of organizational culture on the performance of translation projects in Nairobi. The study was anchored on the following theories; Dynamic Capabilities Theory, Theory of Planned behavior and Durkheim's Theory of Culture. Based on the type of data collected for the present study, this study was hinged on descriptive survey research design. For the present study the target population was the 332 management and operational staff working at the 7 translation companies. Stratified sampling was used to delineate the staff in terms of their positions. Simple random sampling was used to select 101 respondents from each stratum. To gather primary data, the study used structured questionnaires. To gather information on performance of translation projects, documents Checklist was used. The study used inferential statistics to help test the hypotheses. Here, Pearson's correlations analysis was used and multiple regression analysis was used to ascertain the degree to which the independent variables predict the dependent variable at 95% significant level. The results show that: there was no effective transformational leadership ( $r=0.668$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ;  $\beta_1 = .398$ ), capacity building ( $r=0.681$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ;  $\beta_1 = .373$ ), monitoring and evaluation ( $r=0.533$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ;  $\beta_1 = .359$ ) and conducive organizational culture ( $r=0.729$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ;  $\beta_1 = .401$ ) at the translation companies which negatively influenced performance of translation projects. The study thus recommends that: The management of the translation companies must employ the use of transformational leadership that is charismatic, inspiring and forward looking if they are to improve performance of translation projects. The management of the translation companies must ensure they have monitoring and evaluation department and plan to specifically deal with monitoring and evaluating the progress of projects. The management of the translation companies should create an in-service capacity building framework that is robust and consistently trains staff to be abreast of the changing requirements of the translation market. The staff themselves should also engage in self-sponsored capacity building to help hone their skills. The management of the translation companies should create a consensual organizational culture that builds on the organizational goodwill so as to improve the performance of translation projects.*

**Keywords:** Project Leadership, Capacity Building, Monitoring and Evaluation, Organizational Culture, Performance

## INTRODUCTION

### Background of the Study

The emphasis on project performance anywhere in the world cannot be ignored (Foshan, 2010). Many studies have looked at how projects can be successfully planned and implemented mainly because overall, such performance means the life or death of an organization (Riad, 2012). To therefore consider empirically and even theoretically some of the notable determinants that can be effectively utilized to progress project performance is absolutely necessary. Traditionally, the west has supported projects across the developing world; indeed there has been an inflow of funding especially to parts of the world that have been struck by natural disasters and those that have continued to experience natural calamities. In yesteryears, before the economic downturn in the USA and other western countries, the taps of funding seemed to flow undisturbed and thus the implementers of projects did not give much focus on performance. However, this changed with the economic downturn and donors became keen on performance of the projects and a keen eye is kept on the costs and the end results. There is therefore an increased demand for accurate reporting and accountability, including demand for accelerated progress in the donor funded projects (Kaufman, 2012).

Available literature pertaining to performance of projects constantly reinforce that its attainment can be precipitated by proper leadership strategies, effective monitoring and evaluation, a centralized organizational structure, innovativeness and adoption of newer technologies among other organizational options (Heneman, 2014; Riad, 2012; Foshan, 2010). Performance of projects is the lifeblood of almost all organizations in existence today. Hansen (2014) defined performance of projects as the positive accomplishment of a project characterized by acceptable and effective completion, implementation and monitoring of a project and is normally measured by examining the time schedule, cost, quality and stakeholder satisfaction.

Further, two organizations using the same project management practices and structures will have different levels of success with them. Clearly, there's a lot more to performance of projects than project management. This research seeks to identify and evaluate the factors that determine the results of any given project. Most studies of performance of projects tend to focus on project level, or operational, variables such as level of user involvement, use (or not) of a formal methodology, reliability of estimates among others but fail to consider the actual measures of

performance of projects (Hansen, 2014). The present study will measure performance of translation projects using the largely consented indicators of time schedule, cost, quality and stakeholder satisfaction (Hansen, 2014).

### **Statement of the Problem**

The general management and leadership of projects dynamic has significantly permeated translation companies in Kenya but there exists certain lapses within the organizations that have had various effects on the performance of projects of the entities. The notable ones comprise gaps that have led to projects not going significantly to other parts of the country. The lapses are further witnessed in materials development and the delays in core translation projects. For instance, some projects take more than a decade to conclude possibly because the parameters that relate to performance that this research intends to study. There is a need to consider how certain notable factors could be influencing the performance of projects in these organizations. This connected to the increased costs of some of the projects, way over budget, problems in scheduling and quality of finished product creates a need to contemplate if there is an influence of leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture on performance of projects at the translation companies.

### **1.3 Objectives**

- i. To establish the influence of project leadership on performance of translation projects in Nairobi
- ii. To explore the influence of monitoring and evaluation on performance of translation projects in Nairobi.
- iii. To establish the influence of capacity building on performance of translation projects in Nairobi.
- iv. To assess the influence of organizational culture on performance of translation projects in Nairobi.

## **The Research Hypotheses**

The following were the research Hypotheses;

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant influence of project leadership on performance of translation projects in Nairobi

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant influence of monitoring and evaluation on performance of translation projects in Nairobi.

H<sub>03</sub>: There is no significant influence of capacity building on performance of translation projects in Nairobi.

H<sub>04</sub>: There is no significant effect of organizational culture performance of translation projects in Nairobi.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **Theoretical Literature Review**

#### **Dynamic Capabilities Theory**

Dynamic capabilities theory as advanced by David Teece, Gary Pisano and Amy Shuen and espoused by Wright and Allen, (2014) notes that dynamic capabilities allow for connections that then permit effective coordination, reconfiguration and formation of organizational assets and capacities in a manner that harnesses completion of tasks or projects or even business performance in spite of changes in the organizational dynamics. In order to harness the organizational task orientation, there is need for the said organizations to build on their capabilities whether in technology, human resource, organizational structure and even on their culture.

#### **Theory of Planned Behavior**

This study was anchored on the theory of planned behavior as articulated by Ajzen (1991). This is the main theory of focus in this study since it permeates most of the independent variables. Ajzen (1991) demarcated the Theory of Planned Behavior (TPB), as that attitude through which producing a behavior, and subjective norms, joined with supposed control, outline an individual's behavioral intentions and actions. TPB is fundamentally a progression of the theory of reasoned action (TRA) that took a person or group of persons and the reasons they

accumulated so as to at the end make a decision that then molded a behavior or accomplishment (Madden, Ellen, & Ajzen, 1992; Yi et. al., 2015).

### **Durkheim's Theory of Culture**

The Durkheim Theory of Culture was initially postulated by Durkheim (1890). It is based on a premise of culture described as a web of images and portrayals which are all-encompassing and seen as an arrangement of conduct, quality and convictions which lend themselves to associative character in the organization and which then drive the conduct of employees in the work place. This aggregate conceptualization of culture has to do with the incorporation of the organizational standards, esteems, working framework, convictions and images and the propensities or the employees that build social cleavages.

### **Empirical Literature Review**

Sahoo and Dase (2012) in an exploratory study that looked at leadership and performance of projects of manufacturing firms in Turkey noted that leadership strategies have been linked to the promotion of these aspects of performance and project success. Contextually, they defined a leader as 'one who motivates us to do more than we originally expected to do' (p. 20). The study also noted that while conventional autocratic leadership may cause people's morale to dissipate, participatory tactics characterized mostly by transactional and transformational approaches may be useful in promoting performance targets for most leadership-conscious organizations. There is however need to look at project leadership and how they influence performance of translation projects in Kenya.

Vanessa and Gala, (2011) in a descriptive review touching on capacity building in Sweden public service and targeting a population 233 staff found out certain aspects. First, they asserted that inherent technical capacity particularly in the evaluation process coupled with human capital and its use are valuable forces for operational change in any organization. Also, that, human capital on the project should be given clear job allocation and designation befitting their skill, if they are insufficient then capacity building for the necessary competence should be set.

Shein (2010) in an elaborate qualitative analysis of organizational culture observed that there was still a significant gap in the exemplification of it in literature. Noteworthy though, is the place of organizational culture in advancing the performance or success of projects. The study

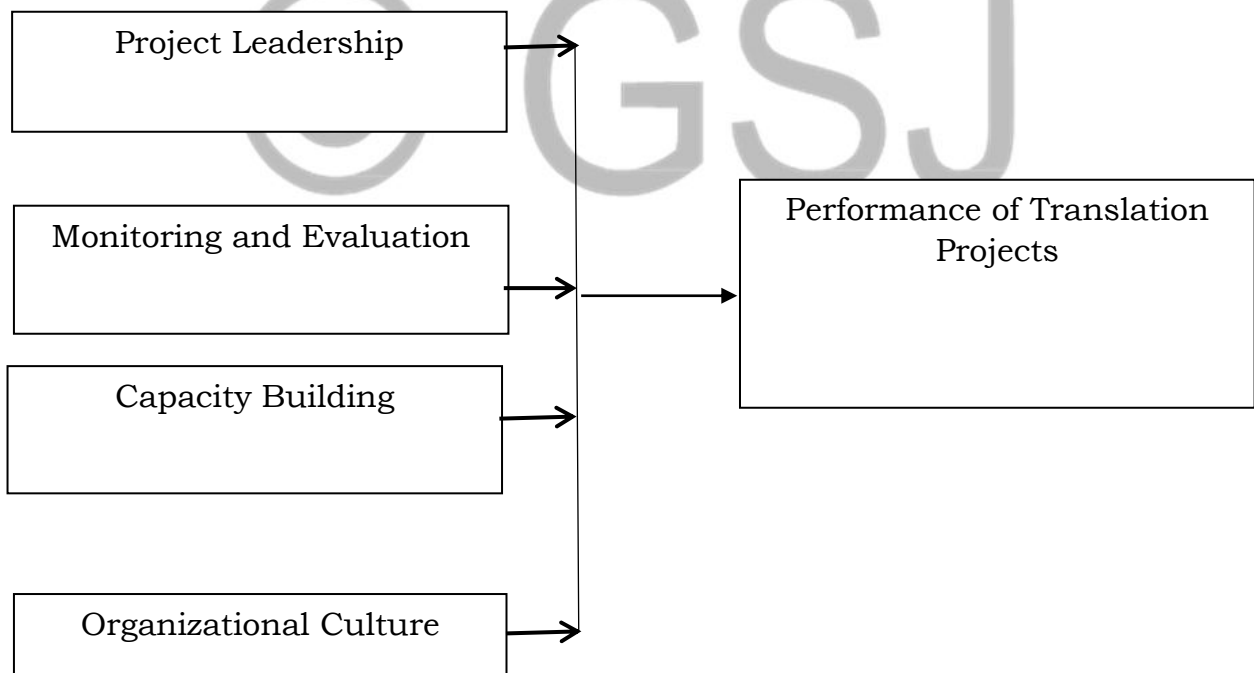
observed that organizational culture, by dint of being an all-encompassing concept in the psyche of organizations, permeates all organizational components and thus has a positive influence on performance of projects; of course, this assertion did not have empirical support, hence the need for the present study. Organizational culture can be defined as the assumptions and beliefs shared by organization members, which influence how staff perceive, think and act (Shein, 2010). The extent to which this description is true for translation projects and how it consequently affects performance of projects in Kenya remains significantly uninvestigated, hence the need for the present study.

### Conceptual Framework

The framework in figure 1 is adopted in the study to show the relationship between independent and dependent variables. The following variables have some relation in determining the performance of translation projects.

#### Independent Variables

#### Dependent Variable



**Figure 2.1 Conceptual Framework**

## RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

Based on the type of data to be collected for the present study, this study was hinged on descriptive survey research design. Kothari (2004) noted that descriptive survey research design is concerned with events occurring in a study area which are either in the past or are continuing and which the researcher cannot manipulate.

### Target Population

For the present study targeted population was the 332 management and operational staff working at the 7 translation companies which deal with projects. The details about the target population are presented on the Table 3.1.

### Sample and Sampling Technique

Simple random sampling was used to select 101 respondents from each stratum. Out of the 101 respondents, 26 was management staff while 75 was operations staff. 30% was used to get this sample and the percentage is acceptable in scholarly reports (Kothari, 2004; Kerlinger, 2006). See Table 3.2 for the Sample Size.

### Data Collection Instruments

The study used instruments to gather both the primary and the secondary types of data. To gather primary data, the study used structured questionnaires. However, to gather information on performance of translation projects, documentation and reports was used.

### Data Analysis and Presentation

The study used inferential statistics to help test the hypotheses. Here, Pearson's correlations analysis was used to check for the level of significant relationships between the variables. Multiple regression analysis was used to ascertain the degree to which the independent variables predict the dependent variable at 95% significant level. The Statistical package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was used to compute the data and employ the tools.

### Regression Model

$$Y_{od} = \alpha + \beta_1 (X_1) + \beta_2 (X_2) + \beta_3 (X_3) + \beta_4 (X_4) + e$$

Where the variables are defined as:

Y<sub>0</sub>- Performance of translation projects

X<sub>1</sub>- project leadership

X<sub>2</sub>-M&E

X<sub>3</sub>- capacity building

X<sub>4</sub>- Organization culture

e- Error term

## **RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS**

### **Inferential Statistics**

### **Correlational Analysis**

Pearson's Correlation analysis was computed, analyzed, presented and interpreted for the translation companies and the results presented in table 1.

© GSJ



**Table 1: Correlation Analysis for The Translation companies**

|                           |                     | Performance | Project leadership | Monitoring and evaluation | Capacity building | Organizational culture |
|---------------------------|---------------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|------------------------|
| Performance               | Pearson Correlation | 1           |                    |                           |                   |                        |
|                           | Sig. (2-tailed)     |             |                    |                           |                   |                        |
| Project leadership        | Pearson Correlation | .668**      | 1                  |                           |                   |                        |
|                           | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000        |                    |                           |                   |                        |
| Monitoring and evaluation | Pearson Correlation | .533**      | .332**             | 1                         |                   |                        |
|                           | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .001        | .001               |                           |                   |                        |
| Capacity building         | Pearson Correlation | .681        | .356**             | .139**                    | 1                 |                        |
|                           | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000        | .001               | .002                      |                   |                        |
| Organizational culture    | Pearson Correlation | .729**      | .005**             | .205                      | .201**            | 1                      |
|                           | Sig. (2-tailed)     | .000        | .006               | .012                      | .024              |                        |

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Wong and Hiew (2005) in their seminal thesis succinctly asserted that the correlation coefficient value was bounded within certain limits which are: a score of 0.10 to 0.29 should be viewed as weak, 0.30 to 0.49 should be viewed as medium and lastly 0.50 to 1.0 should be viewed as pointedly strong. Nonetheless, Field (2005) in expanding the Wong and Hiew assertion noted further that the figure should not read 0.8 and above as that would create a multicollinearity problem. consequently, in the present thesis the highest computed correlation coefficient is 0.729 which is below 0.8 creates no multicollinearity problem (Table 1).

From table 1, all the independent variables (project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture) had a positive relationship with performance of translation projects at the translation companies. Organizational culture posted the highest correlation ( $r=0.729$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ), then capacity building posted the second highest correlation ( $r=0.681$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ), followed by project leadership at ( $r=0.668$ ,  $p< 0.00$ ) and finally monitoring and evaluation posted the least correlation with performance of translation projects ( $r=0.533$ ,  $p< 0.01$ ). This implied that project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture have a positive relationship with performance of translation projects at the translation companies.

## Regression Analysis

Quantitative scales were generated and utilized to measure the hypotheses and thus regression analysis was used to acquire the required results for interpretation. The results are as presented in Tables 2, 3 and 4 and later 5.

**Table 2 Model Summary<sup>b</sup>**

| Model | R                 | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate |
|-------|-------------------|----------|-------------------|----------------------------|
| 1     | .745 <sup>a</sup> | .705     | .611              | .103                       |

a. Predictors: (Constant), project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture

b. Dependent Variable: performance of translation projects.

From table 2 it is manifestly apparent that the R value is .745 which exemplifies a positive direction of the R and which is elucidated as the prediction correlation between the observed and predicted values that are connected to the dependent variable. Fundamentally, in the event the R value (.745) does not come after a – sign, the direction is interpreted as positive and vice versa; and also expresses a strong and significant relationship between the predicted and observed values. Subsequently, the coefficient of determination R<sup>2</sup> score is shown as 0.611. This simply highlights that 61.1% of the change in dependent variable (performance of translation projects) was clarified and predicted by independent variables (project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture)

**Table 3 ANOVA<sup>b</sup>**

| Model |            | Sum of Squares | Df  | Mean Square | F      | Sig.              |
|-------|------------|----------------|-----|-------------|--------|-------------------|
| 1     | Regression | 198.601        | 4   | 67.556      | 76.901 | .000 <sup>a</sup> |
|       | Residual   | 15.709         | 268 | .713        |        |                   |
|       | Total      | 214.310        | 272 |             |        |                   |

a. Predictors: (Constant), project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture

b. Dependent Variable performance of translation projects

The ANOVA table becomes relevant especially in highlighting the F-statistics that is in this case ( $F = 76.901$ ) coupled with the significant value posted at 5 per cent level (Sig.  $F < 0.05$ ). The two important values show that the regression model has passed the ‘model is fit’ test and thus the analysis is strong and stable and thus, there is significantly present a statistically significant relationship between project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture and performance of translation projects at the translation companies.

Table 4 Coefficients

| Model                     | Unstandardized Coefficients |            | Standardized Coefficients | T     | Sig. |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------|---------------------------|-------|------|
|                           | B                           | Std. Error | Beta                      |       |      |
| 1 (Constant)              | 2.605                       | .381       | .229                      | 5.677 | .000 |
| project leadership        | .409                        | .079       | .398                      | 5.009 | .000 |
| monitoring and evaluation | .378                        | .075       | .359                      | 4.226 | .001 |
| capacity building         | .389                        | .083       | .373                      | 4.913 | .004 |
| organizational culture    | .417                        | .086       | .401                      | 5.122 | .000 |

a. Dependent Variable: Performance of translation projects at the translation companies

The t-value produced shows the model is fit ( $t = 5.677$ ) and significant at .000 per cent level (Sig.  $F < 0.05$ ). Therefore, premised on the positive coefficients as viewed in table 4.13, there is statistically significant relationship between project leadership, monitoring and evaluation, capacity building and organizational culture and performance of translation projects at the translation companies.

$$\text{Thus, } Y_{od} = 0.229 + \beta_1 (0.398) + \beta_2 (0.359) + \beta_3 (0.373) + \beta_4 (0.401) + e$$

This implies that project leadership occasioned a 0.398 change in performance in translation projects; M&E occasioned a 0.359 change in performance in translation projects; capacity building occasioned a 0.373 change in performance in translation projects and organizational culture occasioned a 0.401 change in performance in translation projects and thus all are rejected.

Thus: looking at the hypotheses

**Table 5 Hypotheses Testing**

| <b>Hypothesis</b>   | <b>Correlation Results</b> | <b>Regression Results</b> | <b>Comments</b> |
|---|----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|
| H <sub>01</sub> : There is no significant influence of project leadership on performance of translation projects        | r=0.668, p< 0.00           | $\beta_1 = .398$ p<0.00   | Rejected        |
| H <sub>02</sub> : There is no significant influence of monitoring and evaluation on performance of translation projects | r=0.533, p< 0.01           | $\beta_2 = .359$ p<0.00   | Rejected        |
| H <sub>03</sub> : There is no significant influence of capacity building on performance of translation projects         | r=0.681, p< 0.00           | $\beta_3 = .373$ p<0.01   | Rejected        |
| H <sub>04</sub> : There is no significant influence of organizational culture on performance of translation projects    | r=0.729, p< 0.00           | $\beta_4 = .401$ p<0.01   | Rejected        |

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It can thus be concluded that there was no effective transformational leadership at the translation companies which negatively influenced performance of translation projects. Also, it can thus be concluded that there was no effective monitoring and evaluation of projects at the translation companies which negatively influenced performance of translation projects. It can also thus be concluded that there was no effective capacity building at the translation companies which negatively influenced performance of translation projects. Finally, it can be concluded that there was no conducive organizational culture at the translation companies which negatively influenced performance of translation projects.

The following constitutes recommendations necessary to promote business performance, based on the existing organizational practices. The management of the translation companies must employ the use of transformational leadership that is charismatic, inspiring and forward looking

if they are to improve performance of translation projects. They can do this by training on the form of leadership.

The management of the translation companies must ensure they have monitoring and evaluation department and plan to specifically deal with monitoring and evaluating the progress of projects. This will help manage timely completion of projects, the cost and quality of the projects. The management of the translation companies should create an in-service capacity building framework that is robust and consistently trains staff to be abreast of the changing requirements of the translation market. The staff themselves should also engage in self-sponsored capacity building to help hone their skills. Finally, the management of the translation companies should create a consensual organizational culture that builds on the organizational goodwill so as to improve the performance of translation projects.



## References

- Ajzen, I. (1991). *Attitudes, personality and behavior*. Buckingham: Open University press.
- Ashforth, B.E. (2013). Climate formation of Culture: Issues and extensions. *Academy of Management Review*, 10: 837-841.
- Foshan. A (2010). *Management Theory of Leadership and Practice*, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition, Thomson Publishers, Mumbai.
- Hansen N. (2014). A review of cross-cultural research on human resource development. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, Vol 5.
- Heneman, R. L. (2014). *Linking Pay Increases to Performance Ratings*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, Addison-Wesley Press, New York USA.
- Riad, S. (2012). The power of organizational culture as a discursive formation in merger integration. *Organizational Studies*, 26(10), 1529-1554.
- Sahoo, C., & Dase, S. (2012). Women entrepreneurship and connective leadership: Achieving success. *European Journal of Business Management*, 4(3), 115—122.
- Schein, E.H. (2004), *Organizational Culture & Leadership*, Jossey-Bass Publishers, New Jersey.
- Wright & Allen B, (2014). *Strategic management and HRM*. Chapter 5 in P. Boxall, J. Purcell, & P. Wright (Eds.), *Oxford University Press handbook of human resource management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.