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**EFFECT OF ACCOUNTABILITY ON PROJECT PERFORMANCE  
OF CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN RWANDA:  
A CASE OF KIGALI INFRASTRUCTURE PROJECT**

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**Abstract**

The purpose of research was to assess the effect of accountability on the project performance of construction companies in Rwanda with a case of Kigali Infrastructure Project. The specific objectives of this research project were to determine the effect of project sponsor accountabilities on performance of Kigali infrastructure project, to investigate the effect of project manager accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project, to evaluate the effect of project steering committee accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project. Study will be of great importance to the researcher as it will help her to get the knowledge related to the project accountability on project performance. It will also enable the researcher to obtain a Master's Degree in Business Administration specifically project management. The research Informants was selected using census and purposive sampling method. Data collection instrument was questionnaires for primary data and documentary review for secondary data. Pilot study was performed to ensure validity and reliability of data collection instrument while data

analysis was done using SPSS version 23 to get descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. Findings presented using tables. Lastly, ethical consideration was adopted to protect respondents. After findings the following results were obtained using both percentages and inferential statistics, for the effect of project sponsor accountability on performance of Kigali infrastructure project. The results showed that 80% of respondents strongly agreed and 20% agreed that capability of project sponsor in defining project requirement influence project performance, the results showed that project sponsor accountabilities have a high positive correlation ( $r= 0.845$ ). Further, the effect of project manager accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project, the findings revealed that 17.8% strongly agreed and 80% agreed that Project managers allocate adequate resources to boost performance of project, based on Pearson Coefficient Correlation, accountability influences the project performance of Kigali Infrastructure project at  $r=.852$ . The last objective which is effect of project steering committee accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project., the findings asserted that 8.9% strongly agreed and 88.9% agreed that participation in selection of priorities by steering committee influence project performance, there is positive correlation between the project steering committee accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project at  $r=0.814$ ; the study concluded that accountabilities are very important to the performance of construction project by consideration of project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and steering committee. In recommendation, the study recommended that managers need to put more effort in planning and implementation to ensure accountabilities are performed in right manner to deliver the project on time within planned budget.

*Keywords: Accountability, project performance and construction companies*

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Worldwide, accountability has a significant impact on project performance. The effectiveness of the accountability process is crucial to every project performance, anywhere in the world (Davir, 2017). Accountability affects project performance, according to studies done in the United Kingdom (UK) Khalid (2017) stated that majority of construction projects completed within triple constraints due to effective accountability process applied by different parties.

Accountability means taking full responsibility for a project's success or failure. Usually, the governing body assigns the Chief Executive to carry out this last obligation. A crucial element in project performance is accountability where useful of resources, risks and project deviations are discovered through application of accountability. The public and institutional stakeholders must hold accountabilities to ensure the performance of implemented projects. The people who will be impacted by an institution's decisions or actions hold it accountable. Since donors provide the majority of the money for construction companies, these parties are typically held accountable for their actions, along with beneficiaries, employees, and other stakeholders (Bekker, Steyn, 2019)

In china, Yongkui and Zhang (2019) conducted research about the effect of stakeholders' accountabilities on performance of construction projects. The findings showed that establishing accountability stimulates ability to identify objectives and tasks that help everyone to be aware of the responsibilities to be performed during project implementations.

Research conducted in African nations has also demonstrated there is more contribution of accountabilities on the performance of construction companies. According to Robert and Ralf (2019), revealed that in South Africa accountability effects performance of public and government projects in different ways. The effectiveness of the accountability is crucial for outcome of project. Project performance is achieved through project lifecycle, ignoring accountability in project implementation leads to the poor performance of one or more project life cycle stage.

Performance of public projects is measured by efficient use of project resources, projected budget, and schedule fulfillment without sacrificing the quality and quantity of benefits intended for recipients (Stevens, 2016). According to Takim, Akintoye, and Kelly (2013), the effectiveness and efficiency of input to output is more likely the basis for measuring public project performance, so project performance is defined by the amount of time, money spent, quality, and quantity of projects delivered to customers.

In Rwanda, numerous construction companies establish more infrastructure projects as the way of improving socioeconomic development. Currently, the City of Kigali implements more roads and bridge projects in different areas. Ten roads in various locations of the capital are now being built by the City of Kigali. According to MerardMpabwanamaguru, the vice-mayor in charge of urbanization and infrastructure for

the City of Kigali, the roads are a part of the Kigali Infrastructure Project (KIP), which aims to construct a 215-kilometer road network and many bridges by 2024. Phase two of the project includes the 70 Kilometres of construction work that began on January 2023.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Project managers are always excited to see construction projects succeed. This includes finishing the project on time and within budget, meeting end product specifications, meeting customer requirements and meeting management objectives (Cooke-Davies, 2015). A lack of accountability can kill a project. If the internal and external teams aren't clear on who is accountable for the overall outcomes, and who is responsible for certain tasks, the progress of the project and the results can be severely impacted. Ensuring accountability can avoid assigning blame which can arise from misunderstandings about who is responsible and accountable for a task.

Mberia and Oduor (2019) did research about the factors influencing performance of public project in Australia. The results showed that 28% of the projects are cancelled midstream, and 49% of completed projects used 140% compared to planned budget and 180% completed late due to poor accountability at global level. Klakegg et al, (2020), examined effect of accountability on the performance of public project in Ghana. The findings showed that project failed to meet deadline and budget at 21%. Further, ineffective performance of project sponsor caused project to delay at 15% while inadequate monitoring and evaluation, poor communication and lack of accountability for project managers led the failure of project at 47%. They added that poor collaboration and inconsistency sponsor accountable and manager accountable caused project poor performance at 17%. The high failure rate in these projects could be caused by poor stakeholders' accountability like ineffective planning and fail to select adequate project budget. Project failure is still reported in spite of wide range of knowledge and skills on project planning and management, (ICAD, 2016). According to Auditor general's report (2021), 26.8% construction projects in Rwanda have extensively experienced budget overrun, time overrun, fail to meet with project objectives, unmet customer needs and requirements and unmet management objectives. By considering that all studies done outside Rwanda, it is evidently conspicuous that these have not addressed gaps in Rwanda especially effect of accountability on the performance of construction projects using the following specific objectives, project sponsor accountability, project manager accountability and project steering committee accountability. Hence research seeks to

assess the effect of accountability on project performance of construction companies using a case of NPD.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

- i. To determine the effect of project sponsor accountability on performance of Kigali infrastructure project.
- ii. To investigate the effect of project manager accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project.
- iii. To evaluate the effect of project steering committee accountability on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project.

## **2.0 Literature Review**

### **2.1 Theoretical Framework**

The study is guided by Institutional theory, Resource Mobilization Theory Hierarchical theory and Principal Agent Theory which is connected to project accountability and performance of project.

#### **2.1.1 Accountability Theory**

Accountability theory was originally formulated by Tetlock, Lerner, and colleagues in 1999, accountability theory clarified that accountable person is prompted to think about and feel responsible for the method by which decisions and judgements have been made when they feel the need to defend their actions to a third person (Frink *et al*, 2018). Accountability theory helped project team to ensure the assigned tasks are done as expected to get the need results.

#### **2.1.2 Institutional Theory**

Accountability is very important to the institutional level due to great contribution to make infrastructure project successfully are occurred at this stage. Institutional theory gives top management to track any deviations which may affect negatively performance

of project, this theory advises stakeholders how project will be monitor and evaluate to ensure the resources have been used in proper way. According to Jones (2019), the institutional theory explains that institutionalization is a result of stakeholders' efforts to achieve their goals and that power of stakeholders who support, oppose, or try to influence implementation as well as performance of project.

### **2.1.3 Hierarchical Accountability Model**

Hierarchical accountability depicts how tight organizational guidelines, supervisory instructions, and a set of performance standards are used to oversee lower authority leading to the performance of organization or organization project. Romzek and Dubnick(2013) illustrated the role of hierarchical accountability in performance of infrastructure. Author mentioned that accountability should be assigned form top managers to lower managers to ensure evaluation of responsibilities and duties are done in expected manners. Employers should consider how hierarchy may affect their workforce.

## **2.2 Empirical Literature**

Empirical literature enabled a researcher to capture the necessary information supporting the research basing on the previous researchers and scholars who conducted the similar or slightly different research in different countries. Empirical literature is structured as follows:

### **2.2.1 Project sponsor accountabilities on Project Performance**

Dubnick and Yang (2020) examine the impact of project sponsor accountabilities on the performance of construction projects in Indonesia. The objective of the study was to determine the contribution of project sponsor on the defining project success criteria, to establish the role of sponsor accountabilities on the set of strategic control. The methodology adopted was descriptive research design with target population of 457 while the sample size was 21. The sampling technique applied by research was stratified random sampling to get eligible participants. In data collection instruments, research used questionnaires and interview to get primary data and documentary review to gather secondary data. The research adopted pilot study to ensure validity and reliability of data

collection instrument. The findings showed that project sponsor accountabilities influence performance of construction project through appointing managers at 65%, defining project requirement at 68%. Additional respondents agreed that exercising strategic control influence performance of project at 63%. The study concluded that project sponsor accountabilities contribute significantly to the performance of construction project in various approach such as appointing suitable project managers, identifying project requirement as well as funding project. In recommendation, effective implementation of accountabilities of project sponsor is critical to the success and sustainability of project.

Malek and Hawsah(2020) conducted a study to assess the impact of project sponsor decisions on public project performance in Egypt. The target of the study was to examine the effect of project sponsor's decision on the success of the project and to find out the causes of the project sponsor's behavior and decisions on the project performance. According to the study's findings, there are three critical project sponsor decisions that influence project success. 74.6% of respondents said the project sponsor's level of support influences project performance, 23.2% said the decision to set an unrealistic project deadline influences public project performance, and 34.8% said the decision to request a low budget for the project influences project performance.

The study also discovered three major causes of the project sponsor's behavior and decisions, which include the effect of organizational culture and the project sponsor's desire to achieve his/her own personal objectives, as well as an insufficient project management knowledge and experience.

### **2.2.2 Project Manager accountabilities and Project Performance**

Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg (2021) did a research about influence of project manager accountabilities on the performance of public infrastructure project. The objective of the study was to determine the role of managers on the implementation of project practices, to ascertain role of managers to the use of project resources and influence of managers on allocation of resources. The descriptive and correlational research design was applied to identify, interpret the collected data. Data was collected using both primary and secondary data while data was analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential

statistics. The results showed that project is accountable for the use of resources at 69% and allocation of resources computed 74%. Also, the findings indicated there is high positive correlation between project manager accountabilities and performance of public project at  $r=0.86$ . The study concluded that accountabilities of managers improve effective utilization of resources, meeting project schedule and budget, promoting communication among project stakeholders. At the end, research suggested project managers should ensure all assigned activities are done within the line of planning.

Rajani (2017) conducted a research in India to examine the role of project manager accountabilities in improving the public project performance. The target of this research was to find out the important communication skills that a project manager should possess in order to influence the performance of public project. The findings also indicated that was a strong positive relationship between project manager skills and project performance on the correlation coefficient of 0.912

### **2.2.3 Project Steering Committee Accountabilities and Project Performance**

Patton (2021) examined the influence of project steering committee accountabilities on the performance of infrastructure project in Senegal. The objectives of research were to identify influence of provision of advice on the performance of infrastructure project, to determine influence of identification and monitoring risks on the performance of infrastructure project and assess the influence of tracking milestones on the performance of infrastructure project. Sampling technique of purposive was used to get eligible respondents. The findings showed that provision of advice influences performance of infrastructure project at mean of 4.2 and standard deviation of 0.61 while monitoring and evaluating accounted mean of 3.9 and standard deviation of .91, The study concluded that selection of priorities, identifying risks as well as provision advice enhance performance of infrastructure project. In recommendation, steering committee is needed to maintain project completion on triple constraints.

Sabina (2018) examined the impact of steering committee configuration and decisions on public project performance in Pakistan. The study used a qualitative research approach to explore the steering committee factors that affect the performance of the project. The information was gathered from project steering committee members and project

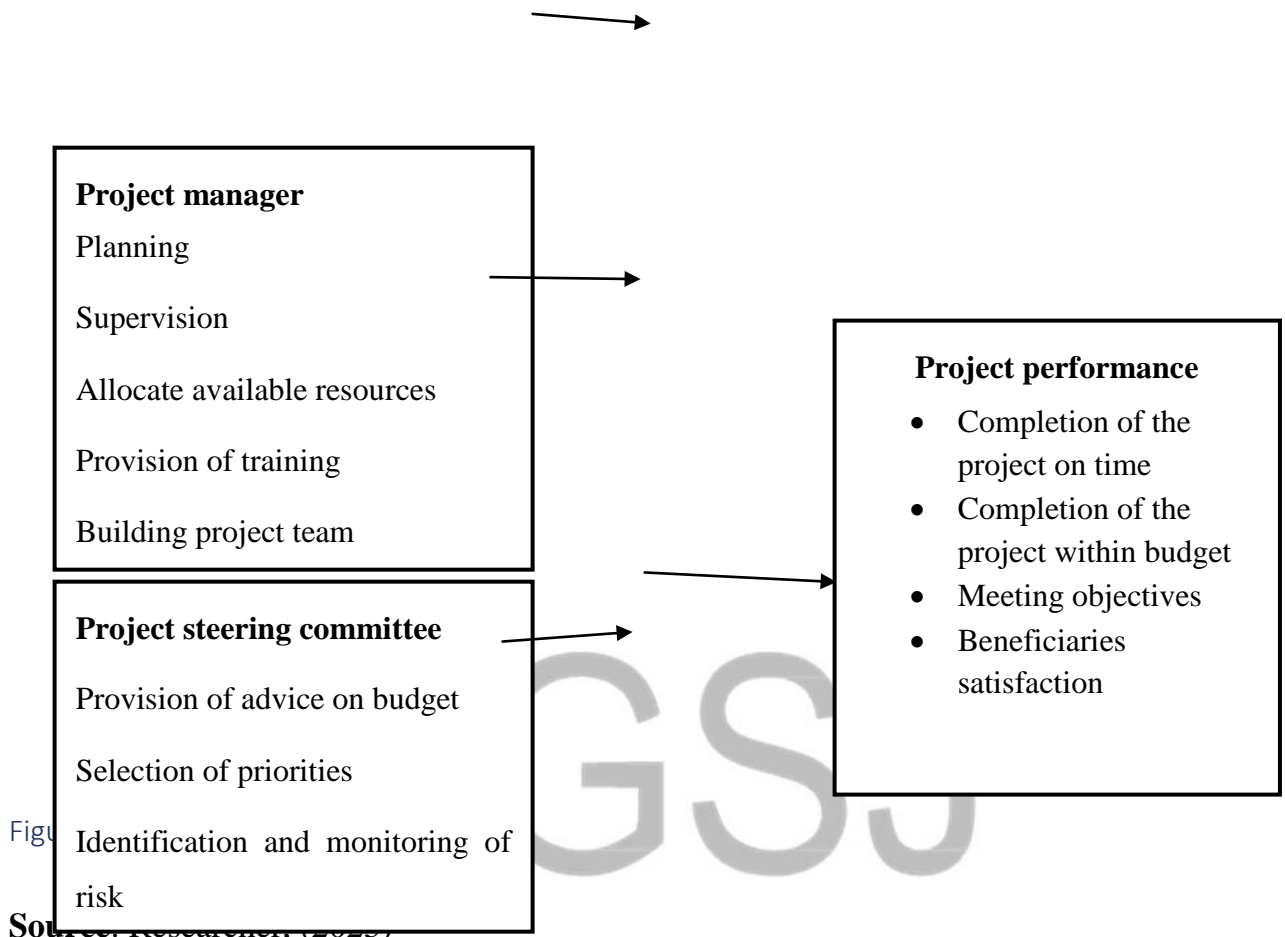


managers. Findings showed that 82.7% of respondents reported that project steering committee play an important role in the execution of the project. Findings also indicated that 78.9% of respondents reported that the existence of project steering committee accountabilities in Pakistan has brought a positive effect on the public project performance. The project success in Pakistan depended on the variables such as steering committee configuration and steering committee processes.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

A conceptual framework is a synthetization of integrated components and variables which help in capturing and solving a real-world problem. It is analytical tool used for viewing the deductive resolution of an identified issue. In this research, Conceptual Framework guides researcher is shown in figure 2.1





### 3.0 Research Methodology

A descriptive research design was used in this study the researcher used descriptive statistical elements such as frequencies, percentages. On the other hand, measures of central tendency were used as a statistic that represents the single value of the entire population or a dataset. Lastly, inferential statistics by the use of Pearson correlation ( $r$ ) and multiple linear regression analysis was applied as the way of testing effect of independent variable on the dependent variable. The target population as well as sample size was 65 while primary and secondary data were employed in the study.

### 4.0 Research Findings and Discussion

The results were collected using both social demographical and findings related to the specific objectives to achieve on the research objectives.

#### 4.1 Presentation of Findings

Each objective was handled chronologically as presented in chapter one of this research.

#### 4.2 Correlational Analysis between accountability on the project performance of construction companies in Rwanda.

Researchers utilized correlational analysis because they were interested in investigating the link between independent factors and the variable they were studying (the dependent variable). The following dependent variables, namely project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and project steering committee, were used in the experiment to investigate the independent variable, which was performance of project.

**Table 4. 1: Pearson Correlation Matrix**

		Project sponsor accountabilities	Project manager accountabilities	Steering committee accountabilities	Performance
Project sponsor accountabilities	Pearson Correlation	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)				
	N	65			
Project manager accountabilities	Pearson Correlation	.797**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000			
	N	65	65		
Steering committee accountabilities	Pearson Correlation	.771**	.784**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		
	N	65	65	65	
Performance	Pearson Correlation	.845**	.852**	.814**	1

Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	
N	65	65	65	65

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

Source: Primary data, 2023

Taking into account all of the variables that were tested, the results showed that there is a high positive correlation between the independent variable and the dependent variable. The results also showed that the project sponsor accountabilities contribute to the performance of project at  $r=0.845$  (84.5%). While project manager accountabilities influence performance of project at positive correlation of  $r= 0.852$  (85.2%). At the end, there is significance influence of steering committee accountabilities at  $r=0.814$  (81.4%). Taking into account all the factors, project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and steering committee accountabilities at significance statistical. The effective implementation of assigned accountabilities plays great role to the performance of project due to various project resources are utilized in appropriate manner. The findings are concurred with the research done David (2019) examined the effect of project manager accountabilities in improving performance of construction project in Uganda who indicated that there is a strong positive relationship between project manager accountabilities and project performance on correlation coefficient of 0.869, to ensure the project will complete in triple constraints, responsibilities and accountabilities must perform in right manner.

### 4.3 Regression analysis

The relationship between the independent variable (accountability) and the dependent variable (performance of project) is shown in this section. For the purpose of determining whether or not the accountabilities had a substantial effect on the Performance of project, a regression linear analysis was carried out. One independent variable can be broken down into its component pieces, which are project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities as well as steering committee accountabilities. In order to determine the effect of the independent variable on the dependent variable, the modal summaries, the variances, and the coefficients of the variables were determined.

### Table 4. 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.884 <sup>a</sup>	.781	.748	.69805

**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

a. Predictors: (Constant), Project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and Steering committee accountabilities.

As can be seen in Table 4.3, the regression analysis revealed a positive correlation (R=0.884) between the model’s predictors Project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and Steering committee accountabilities and the overall R<sup>2</sup> value, which was calculated to be 78.1%. Within the context of construction project performance, the findings substantiated the hypothesis that an independent variable exerts a significant influence on the performance of construction project. The performance of the construction project is significantly influenced by the accountabilities. The research also indicated that improving the performance of construction project required increasing all of its independent variable combined. The findings concurred with the research done by Brinkerhoff, Wetterberg (2021) about influence of accountabilities on the performance of public infrastructure project. After that, researchers applied regression analysis, the findings showed a positive relationship at r=0.86 which confirmed that accountabilities contribute to the performance of construction project by combination of project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and Steering committee accountabilities

**Table 4.4: Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	86.90	8	28.377	44.557	.000 <sup>b</sup>
Residual	24.344	57	.637		

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Total	111.244	65
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**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and Steering committee accountabilities.
- b. Dependent Variable: Construction project performance

Table 4.4 shows that the model predicts that other variables can explain 78.1% (78.1 out of 111.244) of the differences in the performance of construction project, while variables not included in the model can explain 21.9% (24.344 out of 111.244). The F value of the model is 44.557, which is a greater than 0. A P-value of 0.000 is below the set level, which means that the relationship between the independent factors and the dependent variables is statistically significant. The results of Analysis of Variance show that the performance of construction project improved due to the effective implementation of accountabilities for various project stakeholders.

**Table 4.5: Regression coefficients**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)		2.902	1.555		2.445	.000
Project accountabilities	sponsor	.490	.126	.560	3.90	.000
Project accountabilities	manager	.516	.093	.608	5.54	.001
Steering accountabilities	committee	.283	.125	.320	2.264	.000

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**Source: Primary Data (2023)**

Dependent Variable: Performance of construction project

Researcher formulated regression line using the following equation

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \varepsilon$$

By replacing the values of  $\beta$  we get:

$$Y = 2.902 + .56X_1 + .608X_2 + .32 X_3 + .69805$$

In Table 4.5, you can see how the regression values turned out. Standardized factors (Beta) made it possible to figure out how well construction project performance was doing. T-statistics show that the performance of construction project depends on how accountabilities are implemented. The results showed that project sponsor accountabilities ( $=0.560$ ), project manager accountabilities ( $=0.608$ ), and steering committee accountabilities ( $=0.320$ ) all have a statistical effect on the dependent variable.

The results showed that a change of one unit from effective project sponsor accountabilities influence performance of construction project 0.560-times. This shows how project sponsor accountabilities affect performance of construction project and is the best prediction factor of the independent variable. Also, the regression coefficient shows that project manager accountabilities improves performance of construction project at a factor of 0.608 times, while the steering committee accountabilities leads to the performance of steering committee accountabilities at a factor of 0.320 times. The results showed that all the p-values for the independent variables were less than 0.005, which means that the independent variables have an effect on the dependent variables. The project managers as well as other stakeholders play significance contribution to the performance of project form effective implementation of accountabilities within all project phases.

#### 4.5 Results of Hypothesis Testing

The researcher tested whether hypothesis can be accepted or rejected based on the data produced by applying the summary of the linear regression model. As consequence of this, the table demonstrates the results, using the findings of the hypotheses that were tested, the key effects needed to either affirm or reject hypotheses.

**Table 4.6: Results of Hypotheses Testing**

Hypothesis developed	Beta ( $\beta$ )	P-values	Decision on Ho	R <sup>2</sup>
Project sponsor accountabilities	.560	.000	Rejected	
Project manager accountabilities	.608	.001	Rejected	.765

Steering committee accountabilities	.320	.000	Rejected
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### **Source: Primary Data, 2023**

Three hypotheses relevant to research objectives were explored in the study. The first hypothesis stated there no statistically significant effect of project sponsor accountabilities on performance of Kigali infrastructure project, the second hypothesis states that there no statistically significant effect of project manager accountabilities on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project, the third hypothesis states that there no statistically significant effect of project steering committee accountabilities on performance of Kigali Infrastructure project. All hypotheses were rejected since the p-value was less than 0.005, indicating that all variables had a positive effect on performance of construction project. Implementation of accountabilities such as project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and Steering committee accountabilities improve performance of construction project.

### **5.0 Conclusions**

The study concluded that the project steering committee accountability influences performance of Kigali Infrastructure project through providing advices about utilization of financial and other resources to achieve on desired results, identifying and monitoring risks that hinder the performance of construction project. Furthermore, research concluded that steering committee accountabilities play great contribution to the prevention of project deviation and delaying.

As the overall conclusion, all variables considered by researcher including project sponsor accountabilities, project manager accountabilities and steering committee accountabilities contribute to the performance of construction project specifically Kigali Infrastructure project, hence accountabilities are very important to the performance of construction project as confirmed by both literature and findings provided by respondents.

### **5.2 Recommendations**



The research recommended project sponsor to work closely with project managers as well as project members to avoid delaying and misuse of resources during project implementation.

The research recommended that project managers to build the effective project team to enhance the performance of project. Since quality of team produce quality product needed by organization.

Effective planning is key for the success of project. Hence research recommended managers to put more effort in planning and implementation to ensure the project will be delivered on time within planned budget.

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