



ROLE OF ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP ON PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION AT A RWANDA-BASED NGO: THE CASE OF THE UNIVERSITY LEADERSHIP PROJECT

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ABSTRACT

University leadership project is a Non-profit organization established in Rwanda from 2013 that invests in University students because they believe in them to lead and empower their communities. They support students to go for their higher education and organize pieces of leadership training to empower them to be future leaders One path in which poor project administration aptitudes as a rule shows itself is fizzled projects or delays in project execution. The failure to achieve the target of projects is due to different factors including leadership. The study present study entitled "Role of Organizational Leadership on Project Implementation at a Rwanda-based NGO: The case of the University Leadership Project" was guided by the general objective which is to analyse the role organizational leadership on implementation of University leadership project and the study also is guided by the following specific objectives: to determine the role of leadership skills on implementation of University leadership project; to find out the role of leadership experience on implementation of University leadership project; to assess the role of leadership control on implementation of University leadership project and to analyse the role of leadership styles on implementation of University leadership project. The study used descriptive research design and inferential research design. The sample size of the study was 56 employees of University leadership project. They study was based on two theories namely: Goal Setting Theory Traits Theory of Leadership. The study used universal sampling techniques because the sample size equals to the population of the study. Questionnaire was used to collect data and descriptive statistics and inferential statistics as method of data analysis were also

used. For the first objective, the study revealed that leadership skills has significance positive role on the implementation of University leadership project as indicated by $\beta_1= 0.314$, $p\text{-value}=0.000<0.05$, $t=6.926$. For the second objective, the study revealed that leadership experience has significance positive role on the implementation of University leadership project as indicated by $\beta_2= 0.587$, $p\text{-value}=0.000<0.05$, $t=14.560$. For the third objective, the study revealed that leadership control has significance positive role on the implementation of University leadership project as indicated by $\beta_3= 0.101$, $p\text{-value}=.008<0.05$, $t=3.060$. For the fourth objective, the study revealed that leadership styles has significance positive role on University leadership project implementation as indicated by $\beta_4= 0.135$, $p\text{-value}=0.000<0.05$, $t=4.002$. The study concluded that leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership style are significantly linked to the implementation of University leadership project; they play an important role in enhancing project to be implemented. The study suggests introduction of effective controls including processes and procedures and that the management of the project should focus on longstanding approach on control in order to gain competitive advantage, ensure effective and efficient utilization of resources and achieve satisfactory progress on project implementation.

1. Introduction

In management of projects, project leadership is growingly becoming an essential aspect in ensuring project success, and many stakeholders are concerned in achieving various project milestones and deliverables as part of project performance metrics (Ahmed and Vittal, 2017). Project leadership can be looked at from different perspectives including but not limited to Human Resources (HR) planning, strategic goals development, overall organizational management, project objectives formulation, implementation, and controlling various activities aimed at promoting effective operations for a project, and many other activities (Mumford et al. 2017).

Globally, billions of shillings have been spent in community projects to enhance the living conditions of the people (Whittaker, 2019). Empirical studies have revealed that less than one-half of poverty eradication and community based project initiatives in Asia and Sub Saharan Africa ever come close to achieving the anticipated results (Mumford et al., 2017) .They reported that in the last quarter of twentieth century, close to half of poverty eradication projects in the Sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Asia were abandoned or reengineered after a 2-year implementation effort failed due to poor leadership.

According to Ngiri (2019), project leadership management is paramount in the achievement of African countries development agenda including the services industry and infrastructure

improvement. However, Africa ranks lowest in the number of knowledgeable project management professionals. According to Jaafari (2018), the level of project implementation in developing countries characteristic in many African countries is far much lower than that of developed countries. A study on large engineering projects all over the world shows that the projects experienced serious performance problems with an average cost of \$985 million (Kariuki, 2019).

African counties like Kenya, Kenya ranks position 115 out of 183 with regard to time electricity takes to reach the final consumer. A research on world bank funded projects in Kenya revealed that leadership skills such as communication are important for the project to run from design, through to implementation and also increased use of soft skills by employees leads to improved cost performance and improved feedback within project teams (Kanyago & Shukla, 2017).

In Rwanda, project management is yet to obtain full acceptance and use as only few sectors have incorporate proper management as a tool for efficiency in delivering their projects. Fortune and White (2016) established that almost all areas of the Rwandan economy lack project management skills a tendency well displayed by poor performance of bank financed projects in Rwanda. An effective communication between project manager and team members will alleviate intermediary problems that negatively affect the project success while earlier studies have indicated the project manager's communication skills impact on project teams' work has not been ascertained conclusively. Being at the execution and implementing end, managers are dependent on their teams for successful implementation of their orders, directives and instructions. Hence, there has to be an association amongst project manager's leadership, project team member's team work and project outcome; however, very little research has been done on identification of this impact and resultant benefits. Thus, given the importance of various projects in the social-economic development of the country, the amounts of money being invested in these projects and the increased cases of poor project performance in Rwanda informed the design of this study. Therefore, this study sought to assess the role of organisational leadership management on project implementation.

2. Problem statement

One of the primary tests confronting Rwanda today is the administration of government financed projects. These projects are vital and if all around oversaw they will enhance their prosperity and add to the efficiency of this nation. Legitimate project management has been fundamental for fruitful project conveyance. In spite of the developing interest worldwide for qualified project chiefs, there is not extensive number of project administrators who don't have the applicable skills nor does the important project administration rehearse for effective project conveyance (Ling &Ma, 2019). As indicated by a study done by Njakwe (2019), more than Rwf 60 billion is lost because of absence of project administration aptitudes and related innovations both in the private and open segment. One path in which poor project administration aptitudes as a rule shows itself is fizzled projects or delays in project execution (Githenya &Ngugi, 2019). The failure to achieve the target of projects was due to different factors including organizational leadership. Therefore, it is against this foundation that this study sought to build up the role of leadership on implementation of University leadership project.

3. Objective of the study

The general objective of this study was to analyse the role of Organizational Leadership on Project Implementation at a Rwanda-based NGO. The case of the University Leadership Project

4. Literature review

This chapter discusses literature which is associated with the study. The chapter reveals theoretical and conceptual framework

4.1. Theoretical literature

This study was based on two theories of poverty such goal setting theory and trait theory of leadership:

Goal setting theory

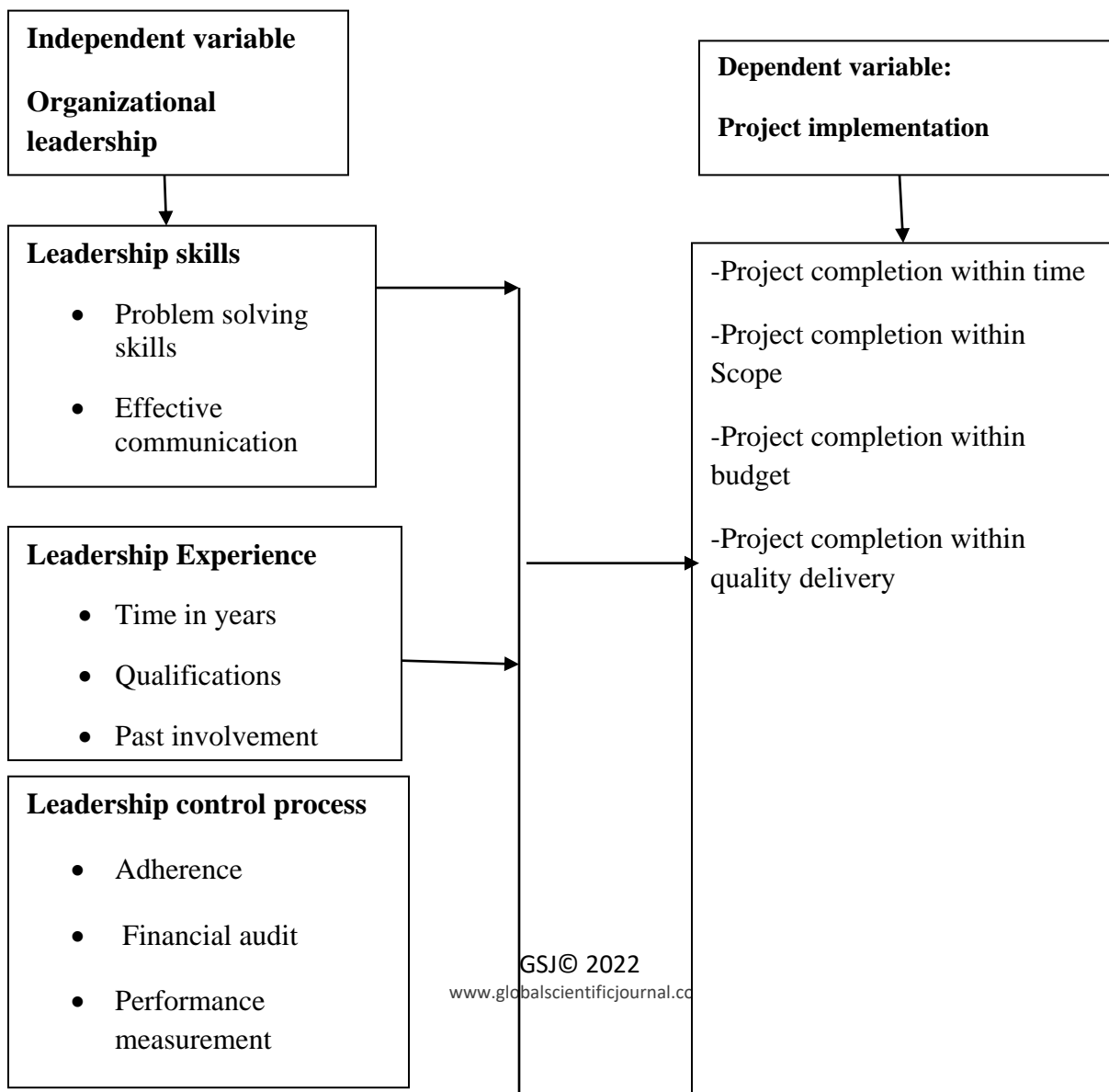
The goal-setting theory was developed by Edwin Locke and Gary Latham in the year 1990. The theory postulates that people who have more specific, difficult but attainable goals perform better than those with less difficult and general goals (Locke, 2017). Locke proposed five basic

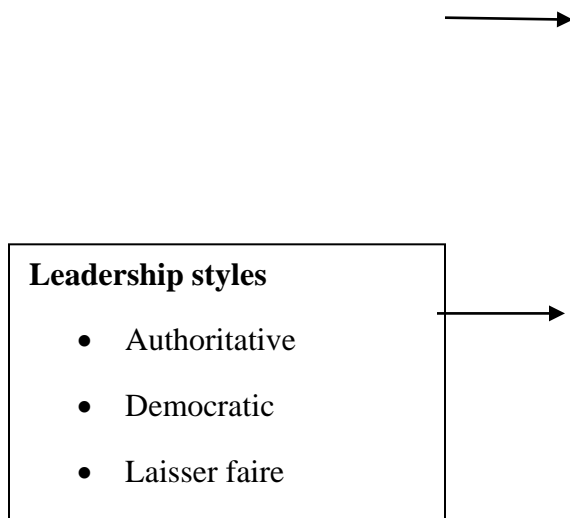
principles of goal-setting: charity, challenge, commitment, feedback, and task complexity. A well-defined goal is more achievable than a poorly defined goal. The goal should be measurable and specific. The goal must also have some level of difficult in order to help people and organizations stay committed towards attaining the goal. In order to help people and organizations stay motivated. Commitment plays an important role towards performance. This theory is implicated in this study because Project leaders of University leadership project need to make some good use of the goal-setting theory to ensure successful project implementation. The leaders should work together with the project staff in setting clear and specific goals by using all relevant leadership skills and leadership experience possessed. Goals et should have some of level of challenge in order to drive the project team to work harder to achieve them. Feedback through information sharing should be highly encouraged. This will help in judging progress of the project, and can either be internal of external feedback. When the project activities are very complex, enough research, time, and resources should be made available to ensure success.

Trait theory of leadership

The traits theory is the oldest leadership theory that states that leaders are born and not made as instigated by Thomas Carlyle in the early 1900s (i.e., that leadership is largely innate, rather than being developed through learning). Huwein and Opfert (2019) emphasized that the trait approach assumes the existence of leadership personality and that leaders are born and not made. The theory of the trait theory of leadership is applicable in this study because the project leader of leaders at University leadership project should also do a situational analysis of the situation at hand and decide among different leadership style such as professional autonomy, decision making collective action and management development) the best one according to the characteristics of project staffs in order to improve the success of implementation of University leadership project.

4.2. Conceptual framework





Source: Researcher, 2022

Figure 1: Conceptual framework

5. Methodology

Research design is the conceptual structure within which research is conducted. It constitutes the blueprint for the collection, measurement and analysis of data (Kothari, 2011). Descriptive statistic and inferential statistics adopted as the overall research design in this study, as the specified approach is suitable for exploratory studies, whose main objective was to discover relevant ideas, insights and techniques with regards to organization leadership. Descriptive research design was useful in describing quantitatively and qualitatively the organizational leadership such as leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles. Inferential statistics especially multiple linear regression and correlation analysis were used to determine the relationship between organizational leadership and project implementation

In this study, the population of the study was all employees of University leadership project.

Therefore the total population was 56 employees of University leadership project

According to Amin (2005), when the population is less than one hundred, there is no sampling. Therefore, the sample size used in this study equals to the target population and consists of all 56 employees of University leadership project.

Open and close ended questionnaires were constructed and were self administered where the researcher allows the study respondents to fill the questionnaire in the study field. The study

designed questionnaires to employees of University leadership project. A questionnaire is a pre-formulated written set of questions to which the respondents record the answers usually within rather closely delineated alternatives. A Likert scale of five responses will be used. Likert scale is an interval scale that specifically uses five anchors of strongly disagrees, disagree, neutral, agree and strongly agree. The Likert scale measures the level of agreement or disagreement. Likert scales are good in measuring perception, attitude, values and behaviour. The Likert scale has scales that assist in converting the qualitative responses into quantitative values (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003). The researcher gathered information according to the study variables in a systematic way to enable answering of the research questions and evaluation of the outcome.

Reliability and Validity of research instruments

Validity of research instruments was used to measure whether the questions in the questionnaire consist of valid questions that are related to the research question as determined by the indicator. The study was used both face and content validity to ascertain the validity of the questionnaires. The questionnaire was validated by discussing it with 6 employees of Muhima Hospital. Further, with the help of the supervisor, their views were evaluated and incorporated to enhance content and face validity of the questionnaires. According to Sekaran (2016) content validity index should not be less than 0.7. The following formula was used to test content validity index (CVI).

$$CVI = \frac{\text{No. of items regarded relevant by judges}}{\text{Total No. of items}}$$

For this study the calculated C.V.I was

$$C.V.I = 16/21 = 0.761$$

If the calculated C.V.I is greater than 0.60 (Saunders et al, 2007) the questionnaire was considered valid. Hence, this study is greater than 0.60, the questionnaire is valid.

Reliability is the degree at which results obtained from a study are consistent after interpreted number of times. Similarly, reliability in every research gives the same results on frequent assessment from an experiment or test by using similar methodology (Hakansson, 2013). Reliability in research is influenced by the degree of error. As random error increases, reliability

decreases (Mugenda, 2013). Reliability of the questionnaires was evaluated by determining the Cronbach's alpha of the results from the pilot study. Cronbach's alpha was used to measure internal consistency of the data collected through the questionnaires. Cronbach's alpha (α) ≥ 0.9 indicates excellent internal consistency, $0.7 \leq \alpha < 0.9$ good internal consistency, $0.6 \leq \alpha < 0.7$ acceptable excellent internal consistency, $0.5 \leq \alpha < 0.6$ poor excellent internal consistency and $\alpha < 0.5$ unacceptable excellent internal consistency.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.714	21

Source: Primary data, 2022

The findings indicated that all variables had a coefficient of 0.714. All constructs depicted that the value of Cronbach's Alpha are above the suggested value of 0.7 thus the study was reliable..

Data analysis

The primary data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency, percentage and standard deviation, inferential statistics such as correlation analysis and multiple regression analysis. The analysis applied the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) to compute the measurements of the multiple regressions for the study.

Multiple regression models: Multiple regression analysis was used to establish the role played by each predictor such as (leadership skill, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles) on University leadership project.

Model specification

Descriptive statistics: Descriptive statistics such as mean, frequency and standard deviation were used to describe the level of application of organization leadership (leadership skill, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles) and also describe the level of project implementation.

Pearson Correlation test: The Pearson correlation coefficient is a very useful way to measure the statistical relationship that exists between organizational leadership (leadership skill, leadership

experience, leadership control and leadership styles) and implementation of University leadership project.

The following econometric model was used as follow:

The equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$)

Where B_o = constant

$\{\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3$ and $\beta_4\}$ = coefficients of independent variables and μ = error term

Y= Implementation of University leadership project

X1=Leadership skills, X2= Leadership experience, X3=Leadership control, X4=Leadership styles

6. Findings

The study sought to establish the significance, direction and strength of the relationship between University leadership implementation which is dependent variable and organizational leadership such as leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles as independent variable.

6.1. Correlation's analysis

Spearman correction method which is known as a statistical technique to measure the relationship between variables was used. Simply it is said that if the correlation value is positive the relationship between variables is said to be positive and vice-versa. After that, the following task is to confirm whether the correlation is statistically significant or not. To this, two famous p-alphas (0.01 and 0.05) are used where the calculated or tabulated p-value is compared to the/m. If the tabulated p-value is below to one among of them the relationship is said to be statistically significant and if it is above the relationship is said to be not statistically significant.

Table 2: Correlation analysis

		X1	X2	X3	X4	Y
Leadership skill	Pearson	1				
	Correlation					
Leadership experience	Pearson	.087	1			
	Correlation					

Leadership control	Pearson	.130	.247**	1		
	Correlation					
Leadership styles	Pearson	.183*	-.156*	.226**	1	
	Correlation					
Implementation of project	Pearson	.699**	.723**	.635**	.593**	1
	Correlation					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.003	.000	.001	.004	

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

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

The results from the table 2 show that there is moderate positive significant relationship between leadership skill and project implementation at $r = 0.699^{**}$; $p\text{-value} = 0.003 < 0.01$.

This means that leadership skill had a positive role on University leadership project implementation

The results revealed that there is high positive significant linear relationship between leadership experience and University leadership project implementation at $r = 0.723^{**}$; $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.01$. This means that leadership experience had a positive role on University leadership project implementation

The results indicate that there is moderate positive significant relationship between leadership control and University leadership project implementation at $r = 0.635^{**}$; $p\text{-value} = 0.001 < 0.01$. This means that leadership control had a positive role on University leadership project implementation.

The results revealed that there is moderate positive significant relationship between leadership styles and University leadership project implementation at $r = 0.593^{**}$; $p\text{-value} = 0.004 < 0.01$. This means that leadership style had a positive role on University leadership project implementation.

With this test, it was assumed that the kind of relationship that exists between independent and dependent variables is linear. To ascertain this, and to know the extent to which the predictors affects University leadership project implementation, regression test was carried out; the predictors in this case include; leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles while dependent variable is University leadership project implementation

. The findings are presented in table 3 below:

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.753 ^a	.566	.557	.16420

a. Predictors: (Constant), leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles

Source: Primary data, 2022

Findings established an R-squared value of .566. This meant that when all the independent variables were taken together, they gave an R-squared value of 0.566(56.6%). Thus, the independent variables (leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles) taken together could account for up to 56.6% of the total variation in implementation of University leadership project at 95% of confidence interval. The remaining 43.4% in the variation in University leadership project implementation could be explained by other factors not in the model.

Table 4: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	6.443	4	1.611	17.9	.000 ^b
	Residual	4.934	51	.09		
	Total	11.377	55			

a. Dependent Variable: University leadership project implementation

b. Predictors: (Constant), leadership style, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles.

In order to examine on whether the data was good fit for regression model, the ANOVA was undertaken and the data being good fit for data was tested at 5% level of significance. Since from the Table 4, indicated an F-value of 17.9 is larger than the critical $F(v_1=4, v_2=51) = 2.53$ and also because p-value calculated =0.000 is less than Critical p-value =0.05 level of significant. Therefore, this implies that leadership such as leadership skill, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles as independent variable are good predictors of project implementation.

Table 5: Regression coefficients

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized	t	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.081	.287		3.771	.000
	Leadership skill	.314	.046	.015	6.926	.000
	Leadership experience	.587	.040	.754	14.560	.000
	Leadership control	.101	.033	.001	3.060	.008
	Leadership styles	.135	.034	.209	4.002	.000

a. Dependent Variable: University leadership project implementation

Source: Primary data, 2022

The equation ($Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \varepsilon$) becomes: University leadership project implementation = $1.081 + 0.314X_1 + 0.587X_2 + 0.101X_3 + 0.135X_4$

The regression equation above has established that taking all factors into account (leadership skill, leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles) constant at zero University leadership project implementation will be 1.08.

The regression results revealed that leadership skills has significance positive role on University leadership project implementation as indicated by $\beta_1 = 0.314$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, $t = 6.926$. The implication is that an increase of one unit in leadership skills would lead to an increase in the implementation of University leadership project by 0.314 units.

The regression results revealed that leadership experience has significance positive role on University leadership project implementation as indicated by $\beta_2 = 0.587$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, $t = 14.560$. The implication is that an increase of one unit in leadership experience would lead to an increase in University leadership project implementation by 0.587 units.

The regression results revealed that leadership control has significance positive role on University leadership project implementation as indicated by $\beta_3 = 0.101$, $p\text{-value} = .008 < 0.05$, $t = 3.060$. The implication is that an increase one unit in leadership control would lead to an increase in University leadership project implementation by 0.101 units.

The regression results revealed that leadership styles has significance positive role on University leadership project implementation as indicated by $\beta_4 = 0.135$, $p\text{-value} = 0.000 < 0.05$, $t = 4.002$. The implication is that an increase one unit in leadership styles would lead to an increase in University leadership project implementation by 0.135 units.

7. Conclusion

The study concluded that all variables such as leadership skills leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles have significant positive relationship with implementation of University leadership project where the combination of all variables such as (leadership skills leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles) contribute to the implementation of University leadership project. The study concludes that leadership experience positively affects the implementation of University leadership project. From the results of the study, the conclusion is that adequate resource allocation improves timely project completion, It is dedicated that organization leadership influence the implementation of project through leadership styles and leadership experience, control and skills where leadership and teamwork in terms of communication, collaboration and cohesiveness. From findings, there appeared to be a general agreement that poor control and monitoring where major cause of project delay to be implemented. Close monitoring of the project progress could therefore improve the schedule implementation of the project. The most significant predictor of whether a project will be completed in time is leadership skill and leadership experience, leadership control and leadership styles according to the model developed by the study.

Recommendations

Based on the findings above, the researcher suggests the following:

The study recommends project implementation emphasis be given to the experience of project staff, ensure that University leadership project is effectively executed in order to fully meet the set objectives. As such proper mechanisms need to be laid out for stakeholder involvement such as having consultative forums, communication channels for information gatherings and feedback to ensure there is continued but controlled engagement throughout project implementation process.

The study further recommends that the project implementation, team should ensure that all the activities in implementation phase are well within the planned schedule. The study finally recommends that there should be well established structures for monitoring and evaluation. These should be designed to factor in every stage of project implementation. The implementation team should have measurable goals at every stage to enable monitoring and evaluation of the extent to which implementation is successful or not. Further monitoring and evaluation would help to determine whether additional strategies could be employed to enhance the process.

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