

Establishing Whether Stakeholder Participation In Planning Influences Road Transport Sector Performance Of Bushenyi District Local Government In Uganda.

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Abstract: This study sought to establish whether stakeholder participation in planning, influenced road transport sector performance of Bushenyi District Local government in Uganda. The study adopted a cross-sectional design using both quantitative and qualitative research approaches on a sample of 112 respondents. Quantitative data involved the use of descriptive statistics particularly frequencies, percentages and the mean. Inferential analysis methods were correlation and regression. Findings revealed that stakeholder participation in planning was good but road transport sector performance was moderate. Therefore, it was concluded that stakeholder participation in planning is a necessary requirement for road transport sector performance but stakeholder participation is not the most probable requirement for road transport but feedback as well. Thus, it was recommended that stakeholder participation in planning should be made apriority in implementation of road transport sector projects to enhance performance of road transport sector; and stakeholder feedback should be encouraged for performance of road transport sector.

Key words: Stakeholder, participation and sector performance.

Introduction:

The dilemma facing public officials in local governments is loss of trust from the public. This revolves around issues of poor individual performance and accountability of decision makers. Thus, it is no longer sufficient for public officials and local governments to demonstrate efficiency and sound business principles. There is need for public participation in planning in an environment where the citizens have a diminished trust in government and are demanding more accountability from public officials (Gibson, Lacy & Dougherty, 2005). Therefore, this research assessed the influence of public participation through the stakeholder participation approach, looking at stakeholders' participation in planning in relation to performance of the infrastructure sector in local governments.

Theoretical Review

This study was under pinned by the "participation theory". The theory argues for a move from the global, a spatial, top-down strategies that dominated early development initiatives to more locally sensitive methodologies. The participation theory developed from deferent sources that are community development movement of the 1950s and 1960s (Midgley, Hall, Hardiman & Narine, 1986); the legacy of western ideology, the influence of community development and the contribution of social work and community radicalism (Midgley et al., 1986); modernisation theory (Lane, 1995); the recognition that the worlds' poor have actually suffered because of development, and that everyone needs to be involved in development decisions, implementation and benefits (Holcombe, 1995); and political sciences and development theory Buchy, Ross and Proctor (2000).The theory postulates that there should be involvement of stakeholders and empowerment of community participants in programs at all levels, from local to national, provides a more effective path for solving sustainable resource management issues.

Review of Related Literature

Stakeholder Participation in Planning and Performance of the Infrastructure Sector

Stake holder participation in planning includes situation analysis, decision making, information exchange and stake holders' approvals (Yee, 2010). Situation analysis concerns 'where are we now' that is the means by which an organisation can identifies its own strengths and weaknesses as they relate to external opportunities and threats (Vrontis & Thrassou, 2006). In relation to the above, Veronesi and Keasey (2009) investigated policy implementation and stakeholder involvement with staff of the National Health Service in the UK as units of analysis. Data collected through focus groups/workshops, semi-structured interviews and documents analysis was analysed through content analysis. Their study established that stakeholder voice provided ample flexibility and room for interpretation given to local bodies in terms of the implementation of the principles contained in the policy-umbrella. Accordingly, the stakeholder approached led to contextual conditions dominating implementation processes especially when the emphasis was placed on decentralised decision-making power. Widespread involvement embodied a fundamental source of context-specific knowledge against the shortcomings of a system otherwise deemed ineffective in supporting the strategic activity of local bodies. With decision making, this consists of optimising or maximising, the outcome by choosing the single best alternative from among all possible one (Osorio, 2009). The main motives of involving stakeholders in interactive decision making includes improving the quality of decision (Edelenbos & Klijn, 2005). In their study, Veronesi and Keasey (2009) investigated policy implementation and stakeholder involvement on staff of the National Health Service in the UK. Through content analysis, they found out that participation led to a greater understanding of the needs of the local population as well as an enhanced awareness on the areas in need of improvement. Essentially, it triggered

a process of learning and knowledge shared by all those actors at some point engaged in decision making. Besides, increase in stakeholder voice was a fundamental means through which to formulate and implement successful strategies because engaging stakeholders in board discussions improved the overall commitment levels and fostered the team working atmosphere, providing renewed unity and a sense of belonging to the local community. On their part, Edelenbos and Klijn (2005) studied the Management of Stakeholder Involvement in Decision Making in municipal councils in the Netherland. The findings of their study revealed that greater input in decision making from a variety of parties generated a variety of ideas and potentially enriched process substance. In regard to information exchange for organisations to perform better, they require open communications and knowledge sharing among parties (Yam, Tang & Chan, 2012). Riege and Lindsay (2006) studied knowledge management in the public sector and stakeholder partnerships in the public policy development. Basing on public sector experiences in several countries in the Western World such as the USA, Australia and European Union, they established that successful public policy depended on effective coordination of many stakeholders, necessitating a chain of processes that involved analysis, evaluation and reconsideration. This only occurred when governments committed to policy objectives that were stated and communicated clearly, honestly and openly. Accordingly, through information exchange, policies reflected shared values of society. Consequently, this knowledge exchange improved the quality and legitimacy of decisions. In regard to stakeholders' approval, Sinclair (2011) indicates that the pace of growth, multiple stakeholders and multiple internal and external approval requirements, have dictated a fluent and rigorous approach to community stakeholder engagement. In relation to stakeholder approval, Sinclair (2011) carried out a qualitative study, developing a model for effective stakeholder engagement management on a large Western Australian Government Trading Enterprise. The results of the study revealed that the benefits of stakeholder engagement included enhanced trust and credibility through improved relationships at various levels of the organisation and the faster approval of the projects with stakeholder managers fostering

organisational interaction and playing an important role in issues resolution and through dedicated resources and early and open exchange of information. The studies above made sufficient attempt to relate stakeholder participation in planning and organisational performance. However, still a number of gaps emerge at contextual and methodological levels. At the contextual level, all the above studies were carried out in the Western World. At methodological level, the study by Riege and Lindsay (2006) was a literature review and all the other studies were carried out using an interpretive approach. These gaps called for this study in the context of countries of the developing world such as Uganda and using a mixed approach for both generalizability and in-depth analysis.

Methodology

This study adopted a cross sectional design by which either the entire population or a subset thereof is selected. The design was useful because it allowed simultaneous description of views, opinions, perceptions and beliefs at a single point in time saving time during data collection (Olsen & Marie, 2004). The information gathered by this design represented what was going on at the particular point in time. This significantly helped in obtaining useful data in a relatively short period. Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used. The quantitative approach enabled the testing of the hypotheses for purposes of drawing statistical inferences while the qualitative approach supplemented the quantitative one by providing detailed information. Therefore, the researcher was able to draw statistical inferences and carry out a detailed analysis. The qualitative component was included in order to provide a holistic overview of the nature and magnitude of establishing whether stakeholder participation in planning influences road transport sector performance.

Sample size determination and sampling method.

The sample size of the study was a minimum of 120 respondents drawn from a population of 337 determined according to the Small Sample Technique by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). For each category of the respondents, the sample was determined using proportionate sampling. The sample size determined is presented in table 3.1.

Table 1: Population, Sample Size and Selection Technique

Respondents	Target population	Sample Size	Sampling technique
LCV Executive Committee	9	6	Purposive
Heads of Civil Organisations	10	7	Purposive
Administrative	22	15	Stratified random
Finance	17	12	Stratified random
Works	22	15	Stratified random
Planning Unit	06	4	Stratified random
Internal Audit	06	4	Stratified random
Sub Counties staff	82	57	Stratified random
Total	174	120	

Source: Higher Local Government Statistical Abstract-Bushenyi District, 2013

Data Analysis.

In analysis of qualitative data, patterns and connections within and between categories of data collected were established. Data was presented in form of notes, word-for-word transcripts, single words, brief phrases and full paragraphs (Powell & Renner, 2003). Data was interpreted

by content analysis composing explanations and substantiating them using the respondents open responses. While analysing qualitative data, conclusions were made on how different variables are related.

Quantitative Data

Quantitative data was analysed at three levels, namely univariate, bivariate and multivariate. The data analysis at univariate level was carried out using descriptive statistics that were the frequencies, mean and standard deviation. At bivariate level, the dependent variable road infrastructure performance was correlated with each of the three independent variables from which hypotheses were developed, namely stakeholder participation in planning, stakeholder participation in monitoring and stakeholder feedback. At multivariate level, the dependent variable was regressed on the three independent variables. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS 22.0) was used for data analysis.

Results and discussion

Table 2. Response Rate

The researcher distributed 107 questionnaires for the questionnaire survey data and planned to conduct 13 interviews. However, the questionnaires that were retrieved fully filled and the interviews conducted were as presented Table 4.1.

Table 2: Frequencies and Percentages indicating Response Rate

Instruments	Selected Sample	Actual Sample	Response Rate
Interview	13	8	61.5%
Questionnaires	107	104	97.2%
Total	120	112	

Source: Primary Data

The results in Table 2 in the first row shows that 8 (61.5%) of the respondents provided interview data. The results in the second row show that 104(97.2%) provided questionnaire. This responsible rate was considered satisfactory because a response rate of 60% is desirable (Nulty, 2008).

Performance of Road Infrastructure Sector

This item of the study was the dependent variable of the study. Quantitative data on performance of road infrastructure sector covered 10 items. The results on the items were as presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Frequencies, Percentages and Means on Items of Performance of Road Infrastructure Sector

Performance of Road Infrastructure Sector	F/%	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
Infrastructure projects are completed effectively	F	12	33	20	36	3	2.86
	%	11.5	31.7	19.2	34.6	2.9	
Infrastructure projects are carried out efficiently	F	18	30	24	32	-	2.67
	%	17.3	28.8	23.1	30.8	-	
Implementation of infrastructure projects reveals productiveness	F	6	30	26	36	6	3.06
	%	5.8	28.8	25.0	34.6	5.8	
Implementation of infrastructure projects meets the intended objectives of government	F	9	30	13	46	6	3.10
	%	8.7	28.8	12.5	44.2	5.8	
Infrastructure projects performance involves high initiative	F	15	49	18	19	3	2.48
	%	14.4	47.1	17.3	18.3	2.9	
Implementation of infrastructure projects involves creativity	F	6	39	26	33	-	2.83
	%	5.8	37.5	25.0	31.7	-	
Infrastructure projects completion meet set deadlines	F	6	9	36	47	6	3.37
	%	5.8	8.7	34.6	45.2	5.8	
Infrastructure projects meet formal performance requirements	F	3	15	31	52	3	3.36
	%	2.9	14.4	29.8	50.0	2.9	
Value for money is obtained in the implementation of infrastructure projects	F	-	17	17	64	6	3.57
	%	-	16.3	16.3	61.5	5.8	
Assigned infrastructure projects have been completed	F	3	33	27	29	12	3.13
	%	2.9	31.7	26.0	27.9	11.5	

The results in Table 3 with respect to whether infrastructure projects were completed effectively, cumulatively the larger percentage (43.2%) of the respondents disagreed, 19.2% were undecided while 39.5% agreed. The mean = 2.86 was just below 3 which on the five-point Likert scale used to measure the items

corresponded to undecided. The results being just below code 3 that is undecided which is the average this meant that the respondents indicated to a lesser extent, infrastructure projects were completed effectively. With respect to whether infrastructure projects were carried out efficiently, cumulatively the larger percentage (46.1%) of

the respondents disagreed, 23.1% were undecided while 30.8% agreed. The mean = 2.67 was just below 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results being just below 3 meant that to a lesser extent, infrastructure projects were carried out efficiently. About implementation of infrastructure projects revealing productiveness, cumulatively the larger percentage (40.4%) of the respondents agreed, 25.0% were undecided while 34.6% agreed. The mean = 3.06 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results suggested that fairly, implementation of infrastructure projects revealed productiveness. As regards implementation of infrastructure projects meeting the intended objectives of government, cumulatively the larger percentage (50.0%) of the respondents agreed, 12.50% were undecided while 37.5% agreed. The mean = 3.10 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results suggested that fairly, implementation of infrastructure projects meeting the intended objectives of government. With respect to whether infrastructure projects performance involved high initiative, cumulatively the majority percentage (61.5%) of the respondents disagreed, 17.3% were undecided while 21.2% agreed. The mean = 2.48 was close to 2 which corresponded with disagreed. The results suggested that the respondents indicated that infrastructure projects performance did not involve high initiative. Regarding whether implementation of infrastructure projects involved creativity, cumulatively the larger percentage (43.3%) of the respondents agreed, 25.0% were undecided while 31.7% agreed. The mean = 2.83 was just below 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results suggested that to a lesser extent, implementation of infrastructure projects involved creativity. As regards to whether infrastructure projects completion meeting set deadlines, cumulatively the larger percentage (51.0%) of

the respondents agreed while 34.6% were undecided and 14.5% disagreed. The mean = 3.37 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results implied that fairly, infrastructure projects completion meeting set deadlines. Concerning whether infrastructure projects met formal performance requirements, cumulatively the larger percentage (52.9%) of the respondents agreed while 29.8% were undecided and 17.3% disagreed. The mean = 3.36 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results meant that fairly, infrastructure projects met formal performance requirements. About there being value for money in the implementation of infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority percentage (66.3%) of the respondents agreed while 16.3% were undecided and another 16.3% disagreed. The mean = 3.57 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results meant that fairly, there was value for money in the implementation of infrastructure projects. With respect to whether assigned infrastructure projects had been completed, cumulatively the larger percentage (39.4%) of the respondents agreed, 26.0% were undecided while 34.6% disagreed. The mean = 3.1 was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. The results implied that fairly, assigned infrastructure projects had been completed. The overall mean = 3.04 for all the 10 items measuring performance of road infrastructure sector was close to 3 which corresponded with undecided. This implied that the respondents suggested that there was fair performance of road infrastructure sector. To find out whether the results obtained above were normally distributed and thus could be subjected to correlation and regression analyses and appropriate results got, a histogram was constructed to portray the normality of the results. The curve in Figure 1 shows normal distribution of the average index on performance of road infrastructure sector.

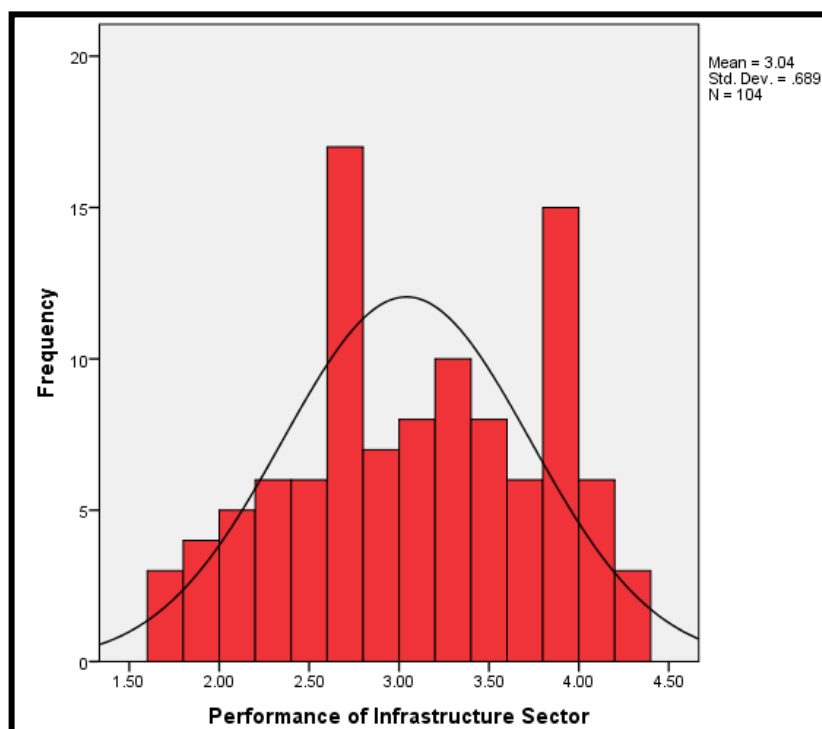


Figure 1: Histogram Indicating Distribution of Performance of Road Infrastructure Sector

Besides the quantitative data above, interview data was collected on the performance of the road sector in the district. One respondent stated, “The projects would be completed in time if only the equipments were enough and breakdown is addressed immediately. Lack of resources has made road infrastructure implementation an impossible task for the district. There is lack of sufficient funding for roads projects implementation.” Another respondent remarked, “Performance of road infrastructure meets the expectations of stakeholders, though there are challenges of meeting deadlines, effectiveness and efficiency in some few instance due to budgetary constraints as a result of market prices fluctuations and delayed availability of resources.” In addition, another respondent said, “The road works in the district are good and regularly maintained but there still need for the centre to increase funding for road works.” Further still, another respondent remarked, “The performance of road infrastructure road projects in the district is generally low especially in terms of value for money. Many roads

become impassable soon after they have been done.” Similarly, another respondent said, “The performance of road sector infrastructure in the district is moderate because the resources availed for implementation of projects are very little as compared to the needs of the sector.” Overall, the qualitative results above reveal that road sector performance was not good. Problems included limited resources, lack of equipment and misuse of money. However, the results are consistent with the results from the descriptive statistics which indicated that the performance of the roads sector in the district was fair.

Stakeholder Participation in Planning

This item of the study presents results on the first objective of the study that sought to establish whether stakeholder participation in planning influenced road transport sector performance. Stakeholder participation in planning was studied 10 items (Appendix B). The results on stakeholder participation in planning items were as presented in Table 4.3.

Table 4: Frequencies, Percentages and Means on Items of Stakeholder Participation in Planning

Stakeholder Participation in Planning	F/%	SD	D	U	A	SA	Mean
Infrastructure projects are distributed basing on the contextual needs of specific areas	F	6	3	9	74	12	3.80
	%	5.8	2.9	8.7	71.2	11.5	
Infrastructure projects fit specificities of the local conditions	F	-	15	24	59	5.8	3.54
	%	-	14.4	23.1	56.7	5.8	
There is greater understanding of the needs of the local population of specific areas in implementing infrastructure projects	F	3	6	19	62	14	3.75
	%	2.9	5.8	18.3	59.6	13.5	
Infrastructure projects ideas obtained from people of specific areas	F	-	9	20	59	16	3.79
	%	-	8.7	19.2	56.7	15.4	
Different people involved in the district planning and budgeting infrastructure projects	F	-	19	14	64	7	3.57
	%	-	18.3	13.5	61.5	6.7	
There is commitment in implementation of infrastructure projects	F	3	6	8	58	29	4.00
	%	2.9	5.8	7.7	55.8	27.9	
There is teamwork in implementation of the infrastructure projects	F	3	15	14	48	24	3.72
	%	2.9	14.4	13.5	46.2	23.1	
Infrastructure projects met the peoples quality expectations	F	6	18	22	55	3	3.30
	%	5.8	17.3	21.2	52.9	2.9	
The infrastructure projects meet legitimacy of decisions	F	6	6	21	65	6	3.57
	%	5.8	5.8	20.2	62.5	5.8	
The people offer approval to the infrastructure projects	F	3	12	25	52	12	3.56
	%	2.9	11.5	24.0	50.0	11.5	

The results in Table 4. on whether infrastructure projects were distributed basing on the contextual needs of specific areas cumulatively showed the majority percentage (82.7%) of the respondents agreed, 8.7% were undecided while another 8.7% disagreed. The mean = 3.80 close to 4 on the five-point Likert scale used to measure the items corresponded to agree. This means that the respondents agreed that infrastructure projects were distributed basing on the contextual needs of specific. As to whether infrastructure projects fitted specificities of the local conditions, cumulatively the majority percentage (62.5%) agreed while 23.1% agreed with 14.4% disagreeing. The mean = 3.54 close to 4 implied agreed. Therefore, the respondents indicated that infrastructure projects fitted specificities of the local conditions. With respect to whether there was greater understanding of the needs of the local population of specific areas in implementing infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority percentage (73.1%) agreed while 18.3% were undecided and 8.7% disagreed. The mean = 3.75 close to 4 implied agreed. Therefore, there was greater understanding of the needs of the local population of specific areas in implementing infrastructure projects. Regarding whether infrastructure projects ideas were obtained from people of specific areas, indicated that cumulatively the majority (72.1%) agreed while 19.2% were undecided and 8.7% disagreed. The mean = 3.79 close to 4 suggested that infrastructure projects ideas were obtained from people of specific areas. As regards whether different people were involved in the district planning and budgeting of infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority (67.1%) agreed while 13.5% were undecided and 18.3% disagreed. The mean = 3.57 close to 4, which on the scale used indicated agreed meant different people were involved in the district planning and budgeting of infrastructure projects. With respect to existence of commitment in implementation of infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority percentage (83.7%) agreed while 7.7% were

undecided and 8.7% disagreed. The mean = 4.00 close to 4 suggested that there was commitment in implementation of infrastructure projects. As regards, whether there was teamwork in implementation of the infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority (69.3%) agreed while 13.5% were undecided and 17.3% disagreed. The mean = 3.72 close to 4 which corresponded to agree meant that there was teamwork in implementation of the infrastructure projects. As regards whether infrastructure projects met the peoples quality expectations, cumulatively the larger percentage (55.8%) agreed while 21.2% were undecided and 23.1% disagreed. The mean = 3.30 close 3 corresponded to undecided, which meant that the respondents were undecided. Undecided being the average, the results suggested that fairly, infrastructure projects met the peoples quality expectations. Concerning whether the infrastructure projects met legitimacy of decisions, cumulatively the majority (68.3%) agreed while 5.8 % were undecided and another 5.8% disagreed. The mean = 3.57 close to 4 which corresponded to agree meant infrastructure projects met legitimacy of decisions. About the people offering approval to the infrastructure projects, cumulatively the majority percentage (61.5%) agreed while 11.5% were undecided and 14.4% disagreed. The mean = 3.56 close 4 corresponded to agree implying that the respondents indicated that people offered approval to the infrastructure projects. The overall mean = 3.66 for all the 10 items measuring stakeholder participation in planning was close to 4 which corresponded with agreed. This meant that the respondents indicated that there was stakeholder participation in planning roads infrastructure. To find out whether the results obtained above were normally distributed and thus could be subjected to correlation and regression analyses and appropriate results got, a histogram was constructed to portray the normality of the results. The curve in Figure 4.2 shows normal distribution of the average index on stakeholder participation in planning.

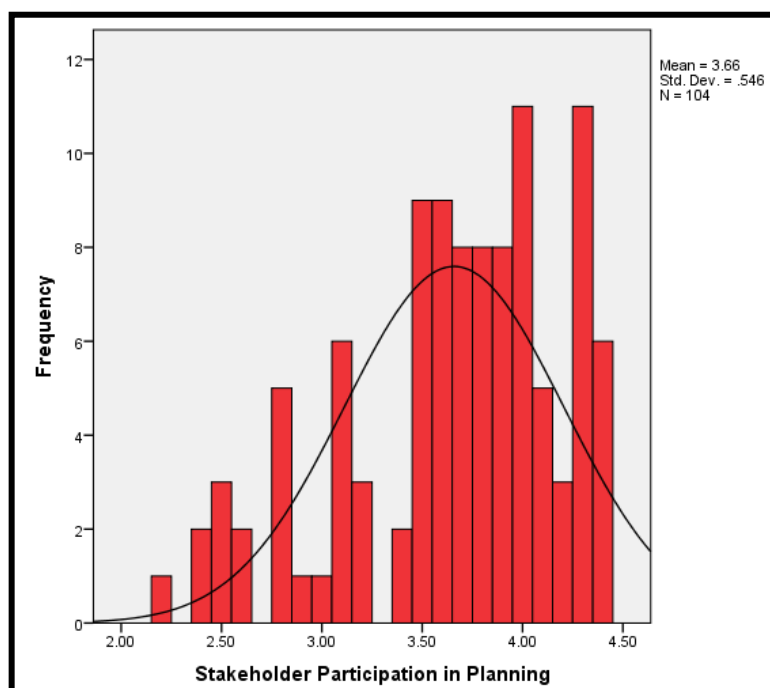


Figure 2: Histogram Indicating Distribution of Stakeholder Participation in Planning

In addition to quantitative findings, qualitative data was collected through interviews. The interview question items required the respondents to give responses about stakeholder participation. In the interviews, several responses were given in relation to stakeholder participation in planning. On respondent stated;

Road infrastructure planning is based on the people's needs and from different areas of the district. Consultative meeting are held through political leaders to executive committees and sometimes comes in as petitions. Infrastructure identification and planning involves all stakeholders. However, implementation is an individual activity and becomes worse when reviews are not done.

Another respondent said;

Participation in projects identification and planning is the norm and requirement by the law. However, stakeholders are classified according to their different roles such as political leaders, civil society organizations and community

members and impact felt from the projects. They are involved in projects planning as their concerns are addressed.

Similarly, another respondent remarked, "Planning is greatly participatory with different stakeholder involved. Stakeholders views right away from village level are sought by letting the people express their needs which are either met by the district or the lower governments."

However, there were those respondents who indicated dissatisfaction with the level of stakeholder participation in planning. One respondent stated, "Bottom up approach is followed. However, people participation at times is not adequate in these meetings because at times they turn the meetings into political. In addition, participation should be much wider to include leadership at the grassroots in the communities." Another respondent said, "Most of the roads were implemented without consulting the committees and even those where consultations were done, during implementation there was no teamwork. However, the communities appreciate what is done." Overall, the above views suggest that stakeholder involvement in planning was good although it is necessary to increase involvement of those people who are close to the grassroots. Overall, the qualitative results concur with the results of descriptive statistics which revealed stakeholder participation was good.

Table 5: Correlation Matrix of Stakeholder Participation and Road Transport Sector Performance

	Performance of Infrastructure Sector	Stakeholder Participation in Planning
Performance of Infrastructure Sector	1	0.585**
Stakeholder Participation in Planning		1

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

The results in Table 5 suggest that stakeholder participation had a significant relationship with road transport sector performance ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, at the preliminary level, stakeholder participation in terms of participation in planning ($r = 0.585$, $p = 0.000$), had a significant relationship with road transport sector performance.

Regression Model for Prediction of Road Transport Sector Performance using stakeholder participation

At the confirmatory level, to confirm whether stakeholder participation influenced road transport sector

performance, regression of the two variables was carried out. Stakeholder participation was studied in terms of stakeholder participation in planning The results were as in Table 6.

Table 6: Regression Model for Road Transport Sector Performance by Stakeholder Participation

Stakeholder Participation	Standardized Coefficients		Significance
	Beta (β)		p
Stakeholder Participation in Planning	0.413		0.000

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.447$, $F = 29.914$, $p = 0.000$

Dependent Variable: Performance of Infrastructure Sector

The results in Table 6 show, stakeholder participation in terms of stakeholder participation in planning of the variation in performance of infrastructure sector (adjusted $R^2 = 0.447$). This means that 55.3% of the variation was accounted for by other factors not considered in this study.

The results indicated that stakeholder participation in planning ($\beta = 0.413$, $p = 0.00$) was positive predictor performance of infrastructure sector and stakeholder participation in planning was not. This means that hypothesis namely stakeholder participation in planning,

positively and significantly influenced performance of infrastructure sector was accepted. The magnitude of the respective betas show that stakeholder participation in planning was more significant.

Conclusion

Stakeholder participation in planning is a necessary requirement for road transport sector performance. This is because stakeholder participation leads to considering contextual needs of specific areas, projects fitting specificities of the local conditions, getting people's input, teamwork, legitimacy and approval of the projects by the concerned stakeholders.

Recommendation

Stakeholder participation should be made a priority in implementation of road transport sector projects. This is necessary to consider contextual needs of specific areas, making projects fit specificities of the local conditions, get people's input, attract teamwork and win legitimacy and approval of projects by the stakeholder.

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